



ROMAN CATHOLICISM

IN THE

UNITED STATES



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# ROMAN CATHOLICISM

IN THE

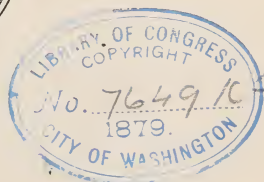
## UNITED STATES.

By H. C. Pedder.

*"The Church of Rome,  
Mixing two governments that ill assort,  
Hath missed her footing, fallen into the mire,  
And there herself and burden much defiled."*

DANTE.

*"Popery is a double thing to deal with, and claims a twofold power,  
ecclesiastical and political, both usurped, and the one supporting the  
other."—MILTON.*



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# ROMAN CATHOLICISM

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### CHAPTER I.

#### STATEMENT OF THE SUBJECT.

WITHOUT wishing to revive those religious prejudices and animosities which have been productive of so much harm in the past, I cannot help thinking that the time has come when we ought to turn our attention to Roman Catholicism, and, in the light of a candid examination, endeavor to estimate as intelligently as possible the consequences which are likely to result from its increasing power and influence in this country.

Commencing our examination of the subject under a due sense of that liberal spirit of the present day which has considerably modified what are commonly known as religious differ-

ences, it may seem useless to devote any time to the discussion of a question so apparently unimportant as the growth of a religious denomination.

But unnecessary as the examination into religious differences is on general principles, there is in the present instance a deep foundation in fact for the discussion. Within certain limits it is undoubtedly safe to leave differences of religious belief to take care of themselves. But we sadly misunderstand the laws of human development if we suppose that a vast and overshadowing system like Roman Catholicism can be safely passed by in silence and unconcern. What applies to doctrinal differences among Christians does not apply to Roman Catholicism. In point of fact, the Roman Catholic Church aims at a spiritual and temporal sovereignty which separates it in kind no less than in degree from other bodies of the Christian faith. Recognizing no equal, and regarding all forms of Protestantism as so many phases of infidelity, Roman Catholicism comes before us, not as a system claiming to be approved according to its merits, but as a system claiming to be on all subjects a supreme and infallible judge. To



regard its growth in the same manner as we regard the growth of the different Protestant churches, is to fall into a fatal error. As far as the interests of modern civilization are concerned, it is a matter of small consequence whether the Episcopalians, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, or the Baptists are in the ascendancy.

But the case is very different with Roman Catholicism. From the nature of its principles, and the imperious character of its claims, Roman Catholicism is separated from other religious denominations in a manner so clear and unmistakable as to show at once the absurdity of attempting to apply to it the same method of treatment.

As Milton said of it, "Popery is a double thing to deal with, and claims a twofold power, ecclesiastical and political, both usurped, and the one supporting the other."

And yet manifest as are the dangers consequent on the growth of Romanism, we have somehow fallen into a state of torpor which, if allowed to continue, will surely end in the most disastrous consequences.

Grossly deceiving ourselves as to the influence which Roman Catholicism is capable of exerting on our national life, we have shut our eyes to facts, and for a healthy liberality have substituted supineness and a false sense of security. Of course, we are, from the nature of our institutions, bound to respect the rights of Roman Catholics, and to allow them full liberty of worship.

Heaven forbid that we should ever descend to those depths of religious bigotry which have stained the records of other nations. But in order that we may realize the dangers attending the present growth of Romanism, it is by no means necessary that we should degenerate into bigotry or ignorant prejudice. To any one who studies the spirit of our institutions it is obvious that the narrowness of bigotry is utterly incompatible with those broad and comprehensive principles which form the very bases of our national existence.

Let us in every possible way eschew bigotry. But in doing so, let us remember that this does not necessarily involve the abandonment of certain questions which are inseparably connected

with our responsibilities as a nation. As the Rev. Hugh Miller Thompson has forcibly remarked in his introduction to Mr. Gladstone's essay on "Italy and Her Church :—" "That a man is a citizen prevents not that he be also a Christian or an Infidel, a Roman Catholic or a Protestant ; and if he be a genuine Christian or a genuine Infidel, a real Roman Catholic or a real Protestant, the fact will work itself out in his citizenship. . . . Vaticanism is alive in America as in Europe. It has just crowned its American heirarchy with the gift of a red hat to a gentleman of singular modesty and good sense. It has chosen shrewdly, as it always does in such cases. Our first American 'Prince of the Church' does not frighten the most jealous Republican. This is as it should be. We must be accustomed slowly to the ideas involved in the gift." Above and beyond what are commonly regarded as the formative principles of our national life, there are invisible spiritual forces which we cannot safely omit in framing our estimate of the present, and in making our calculations for the future. And it is precisely in this connection that the present growth of

Roman Catholicism is of such great importance. We may decry the discussion of the subject if we please. But we cannot check the current of those consequences which inevitably flow from the increasing power of Romanism.

Because it is a mighty spiritual force it affects in a thousand ways all who come within the circle of its influence. Because it is a dangerous ecclesiastical system, confounding the things that are God's with the things that are Cæsar's, it necessarily militates against a free and healthy spiritual growth.

In some respects Roman Catholicism undoubtedly has its advantages. But to a candid observer these are more than counterbalanced by the evils which inhere in it as a system, and which are, in view of its present growth, the real points demanding our consideration. Looking back over the pages of history, he must be either ignorantly or wilfully blind who will venture the assertion that the Church of Rome has been productive of no good in the world.

To attempt an argument such as this is to set facts at defiance, and to substitute the sweeping assertions of ignorance for the careful and deli-

cate analysis which the circumstances of the case demand.

Whatever Roman Catholicism is or has been, it cannot be truthfully charged that it has accomplished no good results ; and it is therefore idle for us to attempt to meet it on this ground. What we ought to do, and what the writer proposes to accomplish in the following pages, is to admit the good that has been performed in certain directions, but at the same time to expose the evils which, like rank weeds, overshadow and choke the flowers which occasionally bloom within the pale of the Roman Catholic Church. By all means let us concede to Romanism all that it can justly claim. But let us guard against the error of supposing that a little good can compensate for a great deal of evil. Under all circumstances let us remember that, although Roman Catholicism has certain features to recommend it, it is a duty which we owe to ourselves and to posterity to protest against evils and errors which strike at the very bases of civilization and progress. Nor do we, in making these concessions to Romanism, deny the fact that in the superabundance of our liberality

we have fostered an evil which threatens us with many serious consequences. It is one thing to recognize that Roman Catholicism, bad as it is, is not without some few redeeming qualities ; it is quite another thing to shut our eyes to issues which are daily growing in importance, and which must sooner or later be realized and settled. Indeed, it is pertinent to our subject to remark that it is precisely this spirit of indifference growing out of liberality which causes the present rapid growth of Romanism in Protestant countries ; thus demonstrating the fact that wherever the liberal spirit of Protestantism exists under its noblest forms, Roman Catholicism is always at hand to make the most of its opportunities.

As examples of this we need only to glance at the present increase of Romanism in England, Holland, and Switzerland, thence passing to our own country. In regard to the rapidity with which Roman Catholicism has increased in this country, it may perhaps surprise some drowsy Protestants to learn that at the present time the Roman Catholics are, according to an eminent Roman Catholic authority, richer than



any other religious denomination in the United States. In the words of this writer : " A hundred years ago there were not more than twenty-five priests in the United States ; in 1800 there were supposed to be forty ; in 1830 the number had risen to two hundred and thirty-two, and in 1848 to eight hundred and ninety. In ten years from 1862 to 1872, the number of priests was more than doubled, having grown from two thousand three hundred and seventeen to four thousand eight hundred and nine. . . . In 1875 there were, according to official statistics of the various dioceses, five thousand and seventy-four priests, twelve hundred and seventy-three ecclesiastical students, and six thousand five hundred and twenty-eight churches and chapels in the United States. There were also, at the same time, thirty-three theological seminaries, sixty-three colleges, five hundred and fifty-seven academies and select schools, sixteen hundred and forty-five parochial schools, two hundred and fourteen asylums, and ninety-six hospitals under the authority and control of the Catholic hierarchy of this country. . . . In 1790 there was not a convent in the United States ;

in 1800 there were but two ; to-day there are more than three hundred and fifty for women, and there are probably one hundred and thirty for men. . . . The value of the property owned by the Church in this country, as given in the census reports, was, in 1850, \$9,256,758 ; in 1860, \$26,774,119 ; and in 1870, \$60,985,565. The ratio of increase from 1850 to 1860 was 189 per cent, and from 1860 to 1870, 128 per cent ; while the aggregate wealth of the whole country during the same periods increased in the former decade only 125 per cent, and in the latter only 86 per cent. In 1850 the value of the church property of the Baptists, the Episcopalians, the Methodists, and the Presbyterians was greater than that of the Catholics, but in 1870 we had taken the second rank in point of wealth, and to-day we think there is no doubt but that we hold the first." <sup>1</sup> In this connection it is also worthy of remark that the Catholic Directory for 1879 makes the number of Roman Catholics at present in the United States 6,375,630, thus show-

<sup>1</sup> Essays and Reviews. By Rt. Rev. J. L. Spalding, D.D., Bishop of Peoria. The Catholic Publication Society, New York.



ing an increase of 4,075,630 over 1860, and 4,942,280 over 1850.

Notwithstanding the formidable character of these figures, it is, of course, to be admitted that as long as Protestantism remains healthy and vigorous, there is not the least likelihood that Roman Catholicism will gain a complete ascendancy. But as any one can see, there is a great difference between a wild alarm having no foundation in fact, and an intelligent prevision which duly provides for approaching danger. While it is certainly true that the present position of Protestantism is in a general sense impregnable, it is no less true that the above figures furnish ample evidence as to the growing power of Roman Catholicism, at the same time that they very strongly suggest the importance of the consequences involved in such growth. Strong in the consciousness of its strength, Protestantism can easily afford to laugh at the thunders of the Vatican. But it must never be forgotten that the sense of security which warrants us in treating with contempt the pretensions of the Roman pontiff does not warrant us

in allowing the consciousness of strength to degenerate into indifference and inaction.

To some extent it is perhaps natural that we should fail to understand Romanism in its true character. But there is surely no reason why we should escape the penalty of wrong-doing because we happen to err through natural tendency. Because the existence of "a free Church in a free State" has been with us a matter of inheritance, it does not therefore follow that we can sink into an apathetic condition without reaping the consequences of our folly. While we may safely congratulate ourselves on the fact that the causes which have induced Germany and Italy to pass certain laws for the purpose of protecting themselves against the encroachments of ecclesiastical power are precisely the conditions with which we as a nation are least familiar, it is most unwise to congratulate ourselves on the possession of a sluggish indifference which is contented to rub its eyes occasionally, and then relapse into its previous state of drowsiness and torpidity. It is true that we have never been brought face to face, as European governments have been, with the enormous

and overshadowing pretensions of Roman Catholicism. But this temporary exemption does not in the least warrant us in supposing that there is any dissimilarity between the conditions which govern Romanism in Europe and the conditions which govern Romanism in this country. Here, as in Europe, there is an inherent antagonism between Romanism and Protestantism which must inevitably produce its results. It is not in the nature of things that the two forces can exist side by side without sooner or later coming into collision ; and it is therefore the merest folly for us to suppose that we can, by a course of indifference, successfully evade evils which have taxed to their utmost the wisdom and energy of other nations.

Indeed, so radical is the antagonism between Roman Catholicism and what we are accustomed to regard as Protestant civilization, that it is impossible to regard the claims of Romanism otherwise than as an audacious attempt to enslave the human mind and to put the clock of the world back several hundred years. To those unacquainted with the real character of Roman Catholicism this language may seem unnecessa-

rily harsh, but it is nevertheless fully warranted by the facts of the case. Setting aside as worthless the work performed by Protestantism, and setting itself up as the superior of all civil authority, the Church of Rome places itself in direct opposition to those tendencies which we very properly regard as the natural and healthy outgrowth of modern civilization. In fact, the claims of Romanism, when properly understood, admit of no limitation whatever. They are simply absolute, and amenable to no human law. According to Cardinal Manning, "The Church itself is the divine witness, teacher, judge of the revelation intrusted to it. There exists no other. There is no tribunal to which appeal from the Church can lie. There is no co-ordinate witness, teacher, or judge, who can revise or criticise or test the teaching of the Church. It is sole and alone in the world. . . . *It belongs to the Church alone to determine the limits of its own infallibility.*"<sup>1</sup>

Certainly this is extraordinary language for the nineteenth century. Nor can we safely dismiss it with a derisive smile, as though

<sup>1</sup> The Vatican Council and its Definitions.

it were mere "sound and fury signifying nothing." Coming from such an eminent authority, and expressing, as it undoubtedly does, the real spirit of Romanism, this language possesses an importance which we cannot safely despise. Of course Cardinal Manning's definition does not prove the power of the Roman Catholic Church to enforce its doctrines; but it certainly does prove that we are threatened by an imperious ecclesiastical despotism which denies the right of existence to those principles which we wisely regard as the safeguards of freedom and intellectual development.

In further illustration of the dangerous tendency of Roman Catholicism, let us, however, look to some other authorities which may be reasonably supposed to exercise great influence in forming the character of Roman Catholic thought in this country.

According to one of these authorities, "We do not acknowledge that, in a State in which the proper relations between Church and State exist, the clergy are amenable for their conduct to the civil courts, or come under their jurisdiction.

If guilty of offences or crimes punishable by the civil courts, they can be tried and punished, not in the civil courts, but in the ecclesiastical. The State has not supreme legislative authority, and civil courts which contravene the law of God do not bind the conscience ; and whether they do or not contravene that law, *the Church, not the State or its courts, is the supreme judge.*"<sup>1</sup>

According to another authority, " A Catholic must not only believe what the Church now proposes to his belief, but be ready to believe whatever she may hereafter propose. And he must, therefore, be ready to give up any or all of his probable opinions so soon as they are condemned and proscribed by a competent authority. . . . Each individual must receive the faith and law from the Church of which he is a member by baptism, with unquestioning submission and obedience of the intellect and the will. Authority and obligation are correlative in nature and extent. *We have no right to ask reasons of the Church, any more than of Almighty God*, as a preliminary to our submission. We are to take with unquestioning

<sup>1</sup> New York *Tablet*, April 8th, 1871.



docility whatever instruction the Church gives us." <sup>1</sup>

In the paper first quoted the following statement also appears in answer to an assertion made by the New York *Herald* that there are thousands of Catholics who do not place Rome above the United States: "The *Herald* is behind the times, and appears not yet to have learned that the 'thousands of Catholics' it speaks of are simply no Catholics at all, if it does not misrepresent them. Gallicanism is a heresy, and he who denies the papal supremacy in the government of the universal Church is as far from being a Catholic as he is who denies the Incarnation or the Real Presence. *The Church is more than country, and fealty to the creed God teaches and enjoins through her is more than patriotism.* We must obey God rather than man." <sup>2</sup>

Certainly if this language means anything it indicates a settled purpose on the part of the Roman Catholic Church to revive, if possible, the ecclesiastical tyranny of the dark ages. In

<sup>1</sup> The *Catholic World*, August, 1871.

<sup>2</sup> New York *Tablet*, November 16th, 1872.

fact, it must be a strange perversity of reasoning which refuses to see in these statements a direct and deadly antagonism toward those principles which constitute the *conditio sine qua non* of our national life. Showing, as they do, the real spirit of Romanism, these statements furnish the most conclusive reasons why we should regard with apprehension the present growth and aggressive character of the Roman Catholic Church. In dwelling thus on the dangerous tendencies of Romanism, it is, of course, to be admitted that we ought to draw a broad line of distinction between the unsuspecting confidence of the Roman Catholic laity and the deliberate scheming of the Roman Catholic priesthood. Most undoubtedly this difference does exist ; and we ought unhesitatingly to recognize it. But in point of fact, a discrimination of this kind makes no difference as to the real question at issue. In yielding their obedience to the teachings of the Church, it is more than likely that the great majority of Roman Catholics have no conception of the vast range of those consequences which are inseparably connected with the unrestricted power of the priesthood.



With them it is a duty to obey the Church, and they obey accordingly. In other words, no matter how monstrous the doctrine, or how great the sacrifice of freedom involved, Roman Catholics are bound to accept the decisions of the Church with unquestioning submission. Freedom of choice and discretionary power are out of the question.

It is true we may occasionally meet with a few members of the Roman Catholic Church who still cling to the spirit of Gallicanism ; but we must never forget that, according to the present interpretation of the Roman Catholic Church, " Gallicanism is a heresy," and therefore cannot under any consideration be countenanced.

" The people need governing, and must be governed. . . . *They must have a master,*"<sup>1</sup> says one of the ablest Roman Catholic writers. The master here referred to is, of course, the Roman pontiff, as the author shows by his remark—" In this sense, *we wish this country to come under the Pope of Rome.*"

Says another Roman Catholic writer : " The Church is certainly intolerant in matters of

<sup>1</sup> Brownson's Essays.

doctrine. True ; and we glory in it ! . . . The Catholic Church alone, in the midst of so many different sects, avers the possession of absolute truth, out of which there cannot be true Christianity. *She alone has the right to be, she alone must be, intolerant.* She alone will and must say, as she has said through all ages in her councils, '*If any one saith or believeth contrary to what I teach, which is truth, let him be Anathema.*' " <sup>1</sup>

Or, to put the subject somewhat differently, it really seems as if it is impossible for any one in the present day to be a consistent Roman Catholic, and at the same time preserve sufficient rational freedom to prevent himself from degenerating into an automaton to be moved according to the will and pleasure of the Church of Rome.

Nor is it enough for us to regard these imperious attempts on the part of the Roman Catholic Church merely as innovations introduced by the Ultramontane party during the pontificate of Pius IX. Instead of these audacious claims being extrinsic to Roman Catholicism, they are

<sup>1</sup> Plain Talk about the Protestantism of Today. By Mgr. Ségur.

really an integral part of the whole system, and have again and again in the history of the world shown themselves in their true colors. Long before Pius IX. was declared infallible, we find Gregory VII. making the claim that the Pope, as "the representative of God on earth," is entitled to the highest and most powerful position on earth.

"God is a spirit," says Gregory; "he rules matter; thus the spiritual is above the temporal power. The Pope is the representative of God on earth; he should, then, govern the world. To him alone pertain infallibility and universality; all men are submitted to his laws, and he can only be judged by God; he ought to wear imperial ornaments; people and kings should kiss his feet; *Christians are irrevocably submitted to his orders; they should murder their princes, fathers, and children if he command it; no council can be declared universal without the orders of the Pope; no book can be received as canonical without his authority; finally, no good or evil exists but in what he has condemned or approved.*"<sup>1</sup> It is true that Gregory attempt-

<sup>1</sup> Cermenin, vol. 1, page 377.

ed to justify his position by falling back on the pseudo-Isidorian Decretals ; whereas Pius IX. surrounded himself with the authority of an ecumenical council. In both instances, however, notwithstanding the unlikeness in some respects, the underlying principle of ambition is the same. Different as are the methods of Gregory and Pius IX., it is not too much to say that when we carry them out to their logical consequences they both end in the abominable sentiment falsely attributed to Boniface, the apostle of Germany—viz., “ Even if a pope is so bad that he drags down whole nations to hell with him in troops, nobody can rebuke him ; for he who judges all can be judged of no man.”<sup>1</sup> Unaccustomed as we are to be brought face to face with the real principles of Roman Catholicism, these statements respecting the audacity of the Roman Catholic Church will at first sight seem almost incredible. Notwithstanding their startling character, it is, however, impossible to understand Roman Catholicism without them. Knowing the value of apparent humility, there is no likelihood that the Roman Catholic

<sup>1</sup> “ Janus,” page 92.

priests will ever reveal these characteristics in their ordinary intercourse with the world. But it is well for us to remember that there is such a thing as hypocrisy in this world. According to Shakespeare :

“ Smooth runs the water, where the brook is deep ;  
And in his simple show he harbors treason.  
The fox barks not, when he would steal the lamb.”

Measuring Romanism by the qualities of manliness and courage which inhere in Protestantism, we mistake the appearance for the reality, and thus fall into the habit of giving to Roman Catholicism those advantages which it most desires. Ignoring the past history of Romanism, we allow our indifference to become a most powerful agency for diffusing the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church.

In view of these facts, it therefore seems to me the time has come when we ought to look the question of Roman Catholicism fairly in the face. If the Roman Catholic Church is an unmixed blessing, by all means let us do everything in our power to assist its growth. If, on the other hand, it is a dangerous system of pernicious doctrine, and an enemy to liberty and

civilization, it surely is our manifest duty to awake to a sense of our responsibility, and protect as far as possible those interests which are threatened by the growth of an imperious ecclesiastical tyranny.

Much as we may respect some of the Roman Catholic priests for their breadth of learning, their earnestness, and purity of life, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the good intentions of these men are powerless to resist that stream of Ultramontanism which is daily increasing its strength from a thousand well-arranged tributaries. In point of fact, it is the Ultramontane party which at present dictates the policy of Rome ; it is through the insidious measures of the Ultramontane party that the conquest of this country is looked for ; it is consequently with the teachings and tendencies of Ultramontanism that we are primarily concerned. Nor is there any reason why the discussion of this subject should be conducted in a euphemistic manner so as to avoid wounding the religious sensibilities of some of our best citizens. It would be strange indeed if, in these days of general enlightenment, one could not attack the evils of a system without giving mortal offence



to all who happen to have been born under the shadow of its name and influence. Even at the risk of unintentionally offending, it is, however, our duty to state the facts, and draw our conclusions accordingly. If there is any truth in the proposition which regards Roman Catholicism as a danger which we shall be compelled sooner or later to deal with, it certainly is not a waste of time or an act of ignorant prejudice to investigate carefully the tendencies of the present, with the view of estimating the probabilities of the future. In other words, if the diffusion of knowledge among us means anything, it surely ought to warn us against the dangers growing out of indifference founded on an exaggerated self-sufficiency, at the same time that our general enlightenment ought to point out to us the necessity of our being, not, "like more simple people, to judge of an ill principle in government by an actual grievance," but to "anticipate the evil, and judge of the pressure of the grievance by the badness of the principle."

In the higher realms of our intellectual and moral life, no less than in the sphere of our every-day experience, prevention is always better than cure.

## CHAPTER II.

### ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL LIFE.

HAVING stated in brief outline some of the reasons which have influenced me in writing this work, it seems necessary that we should, at the threshold of our investigation, understand the importance properly belonging to those influences which, although for the most part unseen by the casual observer, are nevertheless constantly entering into and determining the character of our individual and national life.

Accustomed as we are to measure our greatness by the standard of material prosperity, we are apt to overlook the intimate connection which necessarily exists between spiritual forces and the formation of character. But the fact of this connection no less remains. Indeed, it is not too much to say that inwoven as these spiritual forces are into the warp and woof of humanity, it is impossible to conceive a condition of human life in which their action is not visible and paramount in influence.



Moving silently, but nevertheless surely, along the line of history, spiritual influences are like the links in one mighty chain, the beginning of which reaches far back into the obscurity of the past, and the end of which stretches far into that mighty future which shall finally solve the enigma of human life. Because we are at present overshadowed by what are known as the material interests of society, we may forget that there are such things as spiritual forces. But we cannot, in thus worshipping the triumphs of physical science, ignore those conditions which relate to man as a spiritual being.

From the essential spirituality of our nature, we are constantly surrounded by a circle of influences, the importance of which it is impossible to overestimate. Ecsape them we cannot ; submit to them we must. And thus it is that it seems to me highly important that we should understand what we mean by the term National Life. In using the term do we merely employ it as a vague and meaningless expression ? or do we regard it as expressing a profoundly significant fact, the importance of which we can never expect to exhaust, and the significance

of which we can never hope to fully comprehend?

In other words, in dealing with the questions growing out of our national existence, do we believe in the controlling power of fortuitous circumstance? or do we believe in the supremacy and universality of law? If, according to one view, we believe that the world is governed by what is commonly known as chance, we at once remove the subject from the sphere of reasonable discussion to the realm of mere conjecture; thus denying that there is any value in the caution or prevision based upon a knowledge of the relation between causes and their effects. If, however, according to the other view, we believe that our national life is the result of certain principles operating under the dominion of law, it is equally evident that we cannot too carefully examine the tendency of those influences which are gradually shaping the undercurrent of our intellectual, moral, and spiritual life. It is the silent forces of nature which do most toward preserving and perpetuating life upon this earth. And so it is in the larger and higher world of human thought and feeling.

In the one, as in the other, it is strictly true that

“ A pebble in the streamlet scant  
Has turned the course of many a river ;  
A dew-drop on the infant plant  
Has warped the giant oak for ever.”

In fact, could we follow every influence as it enlarges and extends its range of action, it is not an exaggeration to say that we would be literally amazed at the power of what seem to us the commonest trifles.

What does not make a noise we are accustomed to treat as of no consequence, whereas the truth is exactly the reverse. In the realm of human activity, no less than in the domain of nature, there is far greater power in those noiseless forces which are always operating like so many invisible agencies whose business is to shape the destiny of the world. Under all circumstances they are with us. Nor can we ever hope to set aside that inexorable law which has decreed that there can be no such thing as isolation or dissociation in human life. Owing to the complex character of modern civilization, it may seem almost incredible that there is such a thing as a principle of unity underlying society

and giving to every influence a marvellously wide range of action. Notwithstanding appearances, such is, however, the fact.

Whether we derive our evidences from the extensive range of phenomena with which sociology deals, or confine ourselves to the subjects more immediately under the eye of every intelligent observer, there is nothing more evident than the fact that human life is one vast network of influences constantly acting and reacting on each other.

Indeed, there is a sense, and that a very important one, in which the records of history are but so many attestations of the interaction of spiritual forces and their influence on the world's progress.

Eliminate this idea from the pages of history, and we are completely at a loss to understand many of those important movements which have convulsed society and shaken the foundations of the civilized world. As we survey the history of the world, we are frequently met by the solemn fact that nations, like individuals, have their brief periods of existence, and then pass away. At one moment "they come careering

past us, the very emblems of resistless power." At another time "they subside and are lost among the succeeding waves." So it has been from the beginning of time ; and so it is to-day. The nation that to-day exults in the strength of its youth may in a comparatively short time feel the gradual approach of those declining years which warn us that the end is not far off. And yet there are certain conditions connected with national life which indicate that nations have souls as well as individuals. The man who reflects seriously on his own nature and the conditions by which he is surrounded, cannot help feeling that there is and must be such a thing as continuity of life. The awful solemnity of death causes him to shudder at times, but he does not allow his nobler hopes and his higher aspirations to be crushed by what may prove to be a blessing in disguise. Short as his period of earthly existence may prove to be, it is impossible to resist the promptings of that inward monitor which asserts its superiority to death, and which as forcibly declares that there are in the lives of nations certain principles or spiritual forces which move on to their determined end,

notwithstanding the passing away of those outward conditions which a superficial estimate is apt to regard as the real life.

In other words, it is this underlying principle of spiritual law which gives such solemn meaning to the idea of that serene and beautiful genius which the ancients believed ruled the fate of nations ; it is this indestructibility of moral principle, grounded on the deep spirituality of national no less than individual consciousness, which gives to the idea of a stern Nemesis the importance which properly belongs to it—this Nemesis which “ crushes everything immoral, and obtains the ultimate triumph of the race by the sacrifice of everything which resists the moral laws of the world.” Nor can we dwell too forcibly on this idea of an eternal Nemesis following always in the footsteps of nations, and avenging with certainty every violation of those laws which govern humanity.

Omitting all other considerations, the keeping of this idea before our minds tends to impress us with the importance of that inevitable sequence between cause and effect which underlies spiritual as well as material phenomena. It



is true there is that in the diversified and apparently irregular character of human conditions which seems to contradict the argument in favor of the supremacy and universality of law. But this is, after all, an appearance only ; and as such must not be permitted to influence us in estimating our position under the conditions which guide and control the bark of human destiny. According to Bryant :

“These struggling tides of life, that seem  
In wayward, aimless course to tend,  
Are eddies of the mighty stream  
That rolls to its appointed end.”

Strangely confused as human life appears, there are certain general principles which we can always count upon, certain undeviating factors which tend toward the vindication of law, certain irreversible conditions which render it imperative on nations no less than on individuals to test the quality of their spiritual life.

Touching on one side of our nature the material world and the conditions of physical life, and touching on the other side of our nature the spiritual world and the conditions of psychical life, it is impossible for an individual or a nation

to isolate itself from the conditions of the spiritual atmosphere by which it happens to be surrounded. In fact, it is law which governs the world of mind no less than the world of matter, and therefore it is that in any attempt to deal with a subject such as the one embodied in this work, it is highly important that we should realize clearly the meaning of those influences which Roman Catholicism is gradually disseminating among us. If, as history and experience solemnly proclaim, there is no such thing as isolation in the realm of human affairs, it requires no extraordinary effort to discover the importance which attaches to the considerations growing out of the present attitude of Romanism.

As an answer to this question it avails nothing to fall back on the common assertion that as this is essentially a Protestant country, it cannot be seriously affected by the growth of Roman Catholicism.

There can be no doubt that this idea has carried, and will continue to carry, conviction to many minds ; but to any one who will look below the surface it is insufficient and misleading. Beyond all question this is essentially a Protes-



tant country, and, as far as any *immediate danger* is concerned, is certainly safe against the encroachments of Romanism.

In admitting this, do we, however, set aside the necessity of our acting intelligently in the matter? Having satisfied ourselves that Protestantism will maintain its supremacy as long as we live, do we thereby relieve ourselves of our duty to posterity? Is there no value in that provision which anticipates the future through the character of the present?

Is there no danger in that stolid indifference which refuses to recognize the importance of spiritual forces, and which, as it folds its huge democratic arms in drowsiness, stares vacantly and listlessly at the growth of an evil which threatens the very foundations of intellectual liberty and modern culture?

Having answered these questions as they ought to be answered, it seems almost impossible that we can fail to realize the importance with which the subject of Roman Catholicism presses upon us.

That the Roman Catholic Church must to some extent enter into the determination of our

future, follows necessarily from the nature of things ; but whether it shall be a merely incidental influence acting in subordination to the Protestant principles on which our government is founded, or a vast overshadowing power thrusting us back into the darkness of the middle ages, depends very much upon how far we pursue a course of intelligent watchfulness, or allow ourselves to become the victims of a false sense of security. In this respect let us not be deceived.

As a nation we have been allotted the task of working out the problem of self-government. But we must not suppose, because we have been given privileges which are exceptional and peculiar, that we are thereby exempted from those general laws which hold good in other civilized communities. Judging from appearances only will not answer. Judging from the standpoint of an over-sanguine optimism will not answer. In both these instances we are apt to miss certain subtle forces which do not appear on the surface, but which nevertheless exercise great influence in weaving the web of destiny. Besides, if we appear to be unusually favored as to our

privileges and opportunities, it is worthy of remark that other nations have so appeared at the very moment they were about to be weighed in the balances and found wanting.

In the words of Froude : “ Changes analogous to those which we contemplate with so much satisfaction have been witnessed already in the history of nations. The Roman in the time of the Antonines might have looked back with the same feelings on the last years of the Republic. The civil war was at an end. From the Danube to the African deserts, from the Euphrates to the Irish Sea, the swords were beaten into ploughshares. The husbandman and the artisan, the manufacturer and the merchant, pursued their trades under the shelter of the eagles, secure from arbitrary violence, and scarcely conscious of their masters’ rule. Order and law reigned throughout the civilized world. Science was making rapid strides. The philosophers of Alexandria had tabulated the movements of the stars, had ascertained the periods of the planets, and were anticipating by conjecture the great discoveries of Copernicus. The mud cities of the Old World were changed to

marble. Greek art, Greek literature, Greek enlightenment followed in the track of the legions. The harsher forms of slavery were suppressed by the law ; the coarser and more sensuous superstitions were superseded by a broader philosophy. The period between the accession of Trajan and the death of Marcus Aurelius has been selected by Gibbon as the time in which the human race had enjoyed more general happiness than they had ever known before, or had known since, up to the date when the historian was meditating on their fortunes. Yet during that very epoch, and in the midst of all that prosperity, the heart of the empire was dying out of it."

Of course, I do not mean to say that our position as a nation is analogous to that of Rome. There are many things which separate us very widely from the condition of Rome during the period to which the historian refers. In admitting this difference we must not, however, forget that there also exists a sense in which we are to-day governed by the same underlying principles which governed the Roman Empire seventeen hundred years ago. In many respects the

conditions are changed. But the irresistible sequence between cause and effect is precisely the same. Now, as then, we are brought face to face with the supreme and solemn fact of human life. Now, as then, we are called upon to receive the consequences of our obedience or disobedience to those divine laws which sweep through the ages with unerring precision and certainty. In other words, as we look below the surface, and study carefully the causes which ended in the downfall of the Roman Empire, we can very easily discover the presence of that eternal Nemesis to which I have already referred—that Nemesis which even the confusion and dismay consequent on the downfall of Rome could not swerve from her unalterable purpose.

Circumstances vary, ages change, the world moves ; but under all conditions the great fact of spiritual law remains. To all appearances noise is the necessary concomitant of power ; whereas the truth is the world is governed by those silent forces which enter through a process of almost imperceptible permeation into the mysterious depths of human character.

Nor is it too much to say that if these considerations are properly appreciated they cannot fail to impress us with the important consequences necessarily connected with the teachings of Roman Catholicism, at the same time that they ought also to point out to us the necessity of understanding in what manner the influences of Romanism are likely to affect us. Confronted as we are by innumerable evidences that Roman Catholicism is one of the most tremendous forces with which modern civilization has to deal ; and realizing, as we must, that national character is the result of spiritual forces, it follows of necessity that the Protestantism of to-day needs all the vigilance and energy which characterized the early years of the Reformation. Surveying the vast field which is covered by the manifold interests growing out of the active growth of our national life, he must indeed be a short-sighted man who permits the delusion of an easy-going optimism to so far blur his vision as to cause indifference to our position in this particular respect. Even if it be true, as Mr. Gladstone says, " that every nation is of necessity, to a great extent, in the condition of



the sluggard with regard to public policy—hard to rouse, harder to keep aroused, sure after a little while to sink back into his slumber,”<sup>1</sup> it is equally true that the nation which ignores the conditions of its spiritual life is sure sooner or later to reap the consequences of its folly. In the larger growth of nations, as in the smaller growth of individuals, it will not do to despise the action of spiritual forces because they are for the most part invisible to the eye of the ordinary observer. In view of the magnificent triumphs of physical science in the present day, there certainly does exist a disposition to disparage that habit of thought which is most in harmony with the demands of our higher consciousness; but for the sake of our future let us hope that this reaction will ultimately lead to a clearer and deeper appreciation of those laws by which the spiritual life of humanity is governed. While we may safely regard the present attitude of scientific thought as a healthy reaction from the exploded teachings of an irrational theology, let us never forget that science becomes unscientific when it attempts to set aside certain phenomena

<sup>1</sup> *North American Review*, Sept.-Oct., 1878.

which are coeval with the human race, and which, however much they may vary in appearance during the different ages in the world's growth, are nevertheless supremely important realities which we cannot eliminate from the conditions of human life and development. As in the world of matter all things are governed by the inexorable conditions of natural law, so in the higher sphere of human activity everything derives its character and importance from the relation which it bears to spiritual law and the consequences therein involved. In order that we may properly appreciate our position, it cannot be too forcibly insisted on that the magnificence of our material prosperity is secondary and unimportant when compared with the intellectual and spiritual conditions which form the bases of character. Important as it is that we should be prosperous and powerful in a material sense, it is infinitely more important that we should be prosperous and powerful as to those things which pertain to our intellectual and spiritual consciousness. If, as a nation, we rise no higher than the things which our material prosperity represents, we may safely set it down



as a foregone conclusion that we cannot maintain our present position among the leading nations of the world. What we are is necessarily determined to a great extent by what we strive to be, and in this sense the quality of our aspirations and the aim and purpose of our ideal are of the greatest importance.

Or, to put the subject somewhat differently, it will be well for us to bear in mind the truth which Emerson expresses when he says, "It is a rule that holds in economy as in hydraulics, that you must have a source higher than your tap." In point of fact, our real character is determined, not by our numerical and material strength, but by those silent, and for the most part unseen, forces, which take their rise in the elevations of our spiritual consciousness, thence entering into and shaping the current of that life upon which our destiny and our place in history primarily depend. Measured by the only standard which is worthy of our consideration, it is a matter of secondary importance whether we are or are not, as to our material resources, the superior of other nations; but it is a matter of primary importance whether we are or are not

in a healthy condition as to those forms of intellectual and spiritual activity without which the currents of our national life are necessarily sluggish and impure. If there is any meaning in the bright promise of our national childhood, it clearly indicates a responsibility which stretches far beyond our material advantages, and which also, from its very nature, imposes upon us the necessity of cultivating every influence calculated to strengthen and purify our intellectual and spiritual life. Clearly and unmistakably we could never have attained to our present position among nations had we neglected the cultivation and development of our material resources ; but as clearly and unmistakably our position is mainly due to the fact that as a nation we represent certain principles which place us in the vanguard of civilization and progress. Nor can we dwell too forcibly on this point in dealing with the question of Roman Catholicism and the influences which it exerts on our national life.

To understand the aim and purpose of this tremendous power, we must above all things bear in mind the important fact that there is a

sense in which Romanism and republican institutions are necessarily antagonistic. As slavery was a deeply rooted evil which required a baptism of fire for its cure, so is Roman Catholicism an antagonizing force which requires all the energy and vigilance of an active Protestantism to counteract its influence. Beyond all question it is sound wisdom, no less than simple justice, to allow each person to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience ; but it is the quintessence of mental imbecility to allow a system as vast and dangerous as Romanism to pursue its career of conquest unchallenged.

Because Roman Catholicism appeals to our religious consciousness, it necessarily partakes to some extent of

“ The feeling which is evidence  
That very near about us lies  
The realm of spritual mysteries ;”

but above and beyond this phase of the subject there are other conditions which indicate clearly the antagonism between Romanism and American institutions.

Now, as ever, the enthronement of Romanism means the dethronement of liberty. Now, as

ever, the supremacy of the Romish priesthood means the starvation of reason and the suppression of man's noblest faculties. I am aware that in these days it is quite the fashion to regard the cry of "No popery!" as a hollow and unmeaning sound; but after all it expresses a feeling which every lover of Anglo-Saxon traditions ought to respect rather than condemn. Of course, it sometimes happens that this feeling is carried to an absurd extreme, thus reducing the subject to the narrowness of bigotry. But because this liability to perversion exists, it surely does not follow that the feeling is therefore devoid of usefulness. Of one thing we may at least be sure. And that is, if we do not conquer Romanism it will certainly conquer us. To suppose that there can be such a thing as compromise or harmonious action between Romanism and Protestantism, is to suppose an absurdity. In fact, relying, as we do, for the welfare and success of our institutions, on the unrestricted action of those Protestant forces which underlie modern civilization, we cannot realize too clearly that the teachings and tendencies of Romanism are directly opposed to all that is

dearest to our hearts as lovers of liberty and advocates of culture and progress. Keeping in mind the words of Gambetta, "Always remember that our enemy is clericalism," let us also remember that with us, as with the French Republic, there exists a radical and necessary antagonism between the imperious pretensions of the Roman Catholic Church and the freedom and self-reliance essential to a republican form of government.

That we may do full justice to our golden opportunities and the advantages by which we are surrounded, it is necessary that we should do something more than drift listlessly down the stream of time, regardless of certain consequences which are sure to follow a diseased and debilitated condition of spiritual life. To be really and permanently great, we must dismiss the illusion that there is no necessary connection between religious consciousness and national character. Setting aside the popular fallacy which measures a nation's greatness by military strength and the possession of vast material resources, let us see to it that we advocate that higher and truer estimate which counts that na-

tion greatest in which the higher hopes and aspirations of humanity are most fully embodied. Then, and not until then, will we fulfil the glorious mission which has been laid upon us ; then, and not until then, can we consistently hope that we will be borne onward

“ By that great current in its onward sweep,  
Wandering and rippling with caressing waves  
Around green islands fragrant with the breath  
Of flowers that never wither.”

In point of numbers we may grow larger, in point of wealth we may grow richer ; but unless we cultivate at the same time the elements of intellectual and moral greatness, we are simply giving ourselves up to a base and vulgar idolatry which cannot otherwise than end in the most disastrous consequences. It is true there are times when the interests of civilization are most fully served by those nations strongest in military power and most unscrupulous in territorial acquisition. But to suppose that this is any argument against the supremacy of intellectual and spiritual forces is to misunderstand the subject and overlook the fact that war and cupidity are sometimes necessary evils having their special



uses to perform. As the world moves on, and century follows century, there will necessarily be many changes in the hopes and aspirations of the human race; but, under all circumstances, we can safely count upon the inestimable value of that alliance in which a healthy intellectual freedom and a fine spirituality go hand in hand as the conquerors of superstition and the benefactors of humanity. Nor can we doubt for a moment that that nation is happiest and greatest which enjoys these blessings to the greatest extent.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE SPIRIT OF ROMANISM.

ADMITTING that Roman Catholicism is a mighty influence which we cannot safely disregard, there is an important question which it will be well for us to consider before proceeding farther with our subject; this question being, What is the spirit of Romanism? By answering this question honestly and frankly, we shall be able the more easily to understand the importance



of the subject before us, while we shall also be better able to understand why it is that Romanism and Republicanism are radically opposed to each other.

If, after we have examined into the spirit of Romanism, we find nothing to justify the apprehensions of danger, we are bound to admit the chimerical character of those fears which so largely haunt the minds of many of the most earnest Protestants. Unpleasant as it is to find ourselves the victims of delusion, the interests of truth would demand that we withdraw our charges against the Church of Rome. Even if such a confession involved the admission that Protestantism is a failure, there would be no alternative. If our indictment against Romanism is unfounded, the sooner we understand the facts of the case the better. But it must be borne in mind that whatever is applicable to one side of the subject is equally applicable to the other. If, instead of finding our indictment weak and worthless, a candid examination reveals the fact that Romanism is essentially opposed to the welfare of American institutions, our duty is equally clear, and the demands of truth equally imperative.

Reduced to its last analysis, Romanism is either a blessing which we cannot value too highly, or it is an evil which we cannot watch too closely and guard against too carefully. Between the two extremes there exists no middle ground, no neutral territory in which the forces of Romanism and Protestantism may meet without danger of conflict. Indeed, such are the overshadowing pretensions of Roman Catholicism, that no territory can be considered exempt from the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic Church. With Christian Rome, as with Pagan Rome, the vast and all-embracing aim toward supremacy and universal sovereignty forbids the recognition of anything like half measures. If Pagan Rome followed a dream of glory,

“ Scorning the base degrees  
By which he did ascend,”

so does Christian Rome yield to that spirit of pride and ambition which places the temporal above the spiritual, admits no equals, and looks on all forms of liberty as enemies to be resisted and crushed. “ When Rome has spoken, that is the end of the matter,” said Augustine ; and so says every believer in and supporter of papal

authority to-day. The imperialism of the Cæsars was a stately edifice, founded on power and adorned with the splendid trophies of military conquest ; it was strong, resolute, defiant ; and even now, as it rises among the ruins of the past, it inspires us with feelings of awe and admiration.

The imperialism of the papacy grows out of the perversion of Christian humility into arrogance and intolerance ; but it is none the less real on this account. In fact, there is a sense in which any appearance of unreality in this direction is a source of additional strength and danger.

In regard to Cæsar's conquests, it is easy to trace the operation of ambition backed by power and ability ; whereas in regard to the Church of Rome, there has been, and is, such a cunning admixture of subtlety with power, that it becomes exceedingly difficult to follow the delicate and oftentimes circuitous methods by which the end is sought to be attained.

Different as their methods are, it is as true of Romanism as it was of Cæsarism, that the great aim of existence is domination over the world

and the extension of an authority which admits no rival.

Of course it is to be admitted that there is a great difference between what Cæsar did and what the Church of Rome hopes to do ; but this does not set aside the fact that the pretensions of Romanism are to-day vaster and more dangerous than those of Cæsarism ever were.

Building on the prestige which belongs to the mighty name of Rome, the Roman Catholic Church claims dominion over an empire which dwarfs the most ambitious dreams of ancient Rome, even in her palmy days. In urging his claims to supremacy, it is true that the Pope rests the validity of his title primarily on his position as sovereign of a spiritual empire, but that this removes the dangers consequent on the pretensions of the Roman Catholic Church no one familiar with the history of Romanism will believe.

Aside from all other evidences, we have recently had sufficient proof in the expulsion of Father Curci because he expressed the opinion that the temporal power of the Pope had fallen, and that the Pope would be wiser if he accepted

the inevitable condition of things rather than vainly endeavor to reinstate what cannot be reinstated. "My only fault," says this venerable man, "is having had the courage to speak out regarding the temporal power what all—with the exception of the flatterers who surround the Pope—think, but are afraid to declare. I have come forth and spoken, but I have found the silence of a desert."

In this and similar statements there is nothing which militates against the Pope's spiritual sovereignty, but to the mind of the late Pius IX. and his advisers it was a deadly sin to attempt to separate the spiritual and temporal claims of the Church.

Father Curci was, until his expulsion, one of the ablest writers in the Roman Catholic Church. His writings, besides being an ornament to the Church, have brought into the coffers of the Company of Jesuits, to which he belonged, no less a sum than 160,000 francs. Against the unpardonable sin of questioning the Pope's temporal sovereignty, this, however, could have no possible effect. He had dared to question what, as an obedient Romanist, he ought not to have

questioned ; and the result was he received his quantum of those fulminating denunciations which the Church of Rome always holds in reserve for its rebellious subjects. Forgetting that he wore the chains of slavery, Father Curci attempted to walk like a free man ; and as a consequence he soon paid the penalty for his presumption.

No matter, therefore, how plausibly the argument for the Pope's supremacy is presented, or how artfully the logical consequences of such an argument are concealed, it still remains true that the great underlying principle of Romanism is one of deadly animosity toward everything which interferes with the absolute supremacy of the Church of Rome. Indeed, such are the essential qualities of Romanism, that it is not too much to say that the Church of Rome would not hesitate to put the world back a thousand years, could it by so doing accomplish its purpose. Shrewdly enough the leaders of Romanism profess themselves the friends of progress and enlightenment, but that the real purpose of Romanism is domination at any cost must be at once evident to any one who looks beneath the

hollowness of these empty professions. Given the opportunity, the Church of Rome will do in the future what it has done in the past. Professing to be the friend of progress, it has again and again opposed the power of its vast machinery against the struggling intellect of man. Professing to be the only infallible authority, it now seeks to bring the whole civilized world under a subjection which can only end in the return of those dark ages wherein the human mind groaned in its fetters because priestcraft was supreme. "In place of Christianity, the Church ; in place of free belief, an imposed orthodoxy ; in place of moral fervor, determined religious practices ; in place of heart and energetic thought, external and mechanical discipline : these are the characteristics of the middle ages. Under this constraint a thinking society had ceased to think ; philosophy was turned into a text-book, and poetry into raving ; and mankind, slothful and crouching, made over their conscience and their conduct into the hands of their priests, and were as puppets, capable only of reciting a catechism and chanting a hymn." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Taine's English Literature.



In other words, the aim of Romanism, notwithstanding its fair promises and plausible professions, may properly be said to be the re-establishment of that narrow sacerdotal spirit which has always been the enemy of liberty, and which can only exist under the twilight of ignorance and superstition.

In answer to this it may be said that as the world is so changed as to render a return to this darkness impossible, it is needless to discuss a subject which possesses for us no immediate interest. To some extent this is happily true ; but as it is the condition of the world, and not the nature of Romanism, which has changed, we cannot afford to fall into the error of confounding the one with the other. The power of the Roman Catholic Church is not what it was ; but this is no evidence that it will not seek every opportunity to regain what it has lost, nor does it warrant us in settling down into that sense of ease and comfortable security which we are apt to mistake for real strength and immunity from danger. After we have made every allowance for that march of intellect which has diminished the power of Romanism, it is well for us to re-

member that, notwithstanding our boasted enlightenment, the world has not yet entirely outgrown the superstitions of its earlier days.

There is a general diffusion of knowledge, and a power of resistance growing out of our Protestant civilization, which largely insure us against danger ; but we sadly mistake our position if we suppose that there exist no elements among us out of which Roman Catholicism can construct a formidable aggressive policy. The Roman Church of to-day has not the power to depose kings or to bring rebellious princes to their knees ; but the old spirit, operating under new conditions, still remains. As an example of this, let us mark the words of a prominent Jesuit : “ The interests of mankind demand a bridle by which princes may be restrained and the people saved. This bridle might by common consent be placed in the hands of the Roman pontiff. Such a high priest, mingling in worldly conflicts only to silence them, admonishing alike the sovereign and the people of their duties, condemning their crimes, and visiting his excommunication on great wrongs, would be looked upon as *the living*

*representative and likeness of God upon the earth."*<sup>1</sup>

Surely if language means anything, this assertion means nothing short of a demand that the whole world should prostrate itself before the pontifical throne, and own its allegiance to the Pope "as the living representative and likeness of God upon the earth."

It either means this, or it is loose and vulgar bravado ; and as the latter is scarcely admissible in dealing with Roman Catholic writers, we are bound to conclude that the words mean exactly what they appear to mean. Besides, that this deification of the Pope means a very great deal in reference to us, is fully illustrated by another remark by the same writer. "One of the most glorious enterprises for the Catholic Church to engage in at this day is *the conversion of the United States to the Catholic faith*," says this enthusiastic Jesuit ; and in saying so he undoubtedly expresses the opinion of his ecclesiastical superiors. Keeping constantly before their minds the idea that they will ultimately succeed

<sup>1</sup> The Apostolical and Infallible Authority of the Pope, etc. By Weninger.

in making this country the stronghold of Roman Catholicism, it is not too much to say that the priests and defenders of Romanism never miss an opportunity to disseminate their teachings in this direction.<sup>1</sup>

As in the case of pagan Rome the strength of the army consisted in its perfect discipline and the bravery and the unwavering fidelity of the Roman soldiers, so in the case of ecclesiastical Rome the strength of the priesthood consists in its complete organization and the devotion and singleness of purpose of its members. Unlike the disorganized forces of Protestantism, the defenders of Romanism are held together by a system which renders them thoroughly homoge-

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, an article in the *Catholic World*, for July, 1872, in which the writer says: "With the means of instant intelligent communication and rapid transportation, it is not an impossibility to hope that the head of the Church may again become the acknowledged head of the re-united family of Christian nations. . . . While the State has rights, she has them only in virtue and by permission of the superior authority, and that authority can only be expressed through the Church; that is, through the organic law, infallibly announced and unchangeably asserted, regardless of temporal consequences." This ideal supremacy of the Church, it is claimed by this writer, "*it is within the power of the ballot, wielded by Catholic hands,*" to establish.

neous and cohesive. Where Protestantism hesitates and stumbles for want of clearness and directness of method, Romanism moves steadily on, regardless of everything except the one great aim of its life. Realizing the immense value of concentration of purpose and unity of action, the Roman Catholic priesthood know perfectly well how much they can accomplish by never swerving from the object they desire to attain.

Nor is this all. In addition to its singleness and clearness of purpose, it is one of the principal characteristics of Romanism that it always moves strategically.

What Protestantism is, and what its vulnerable points are, Rome thoroughly understands ; and, we may safely depend upon it, she governs herself accordingly.

That an open contest at the present time between Romanism and Protestantism would certainly end in the defeat of Romanism no one knows better than the ruling spirits in the Roman Catholic Church ; but they also know that time and opportunity under judicious management very often accomplish what at the moment seems impossible.

Besides, this would not be the first time in its history that the power of ecclesiastical Rome had reasserted itself and regained the power which it had apparently lost for ever. As an example of this, Milman, in referring to that period in the history of the Roman Catholic Church which is sometimes called the Babylonish captivity, has well said : " It is perhaps the most marvellous part of its history that the Papacy, having sunk so low, sank no lower ; that it recovered its degradation ; that from a satellite, almost a slave, of the King of France, the pontiff ever emerged again to be an independent potentate ; and, although the great line of mediæval popes, of Gregory, of Alexander III., and the Innocents expired in Boniface VIII., he could resume even his modified supremacy. There is no proof so strong of the vitality of the Papacy as that it could establish the law that wherever the Pope is, there is the throne of St. Peter ; that he could cease to be Bishop of Rome in all but in name, and then take back again the abdicated bishopric."

Having given such ample proof of its vitality in this and other instances in the past, why may

we not suppose that the Papacy is still alive with that indomitable energy which refuses to be conquered?

As I have already shown, there is little chance of our ever being subjected to that insolent tyranny which brought John, King of England, to his knees before the Pope's legate, and which also compelled Frederick Barbarossa "by the heavy hand of God to bow his head and sue for pardon."

But there is a very great probability that, unless we meet the evil in its incipency, we will be called upon in a comparatively short time to meet one of the most momentous questions that can engage us.

While we sleep and snore, Roman Catholicism actively makes the most of its opportunities, and laughs at our somnolent condition.

It is true there are times when the American eagle screeches itself hoarse in proclaiming our consciousness of power; but this is not what we need in dealing with the present emergency.

Useful as the screeches of the eagle and the strut of the peacock may be on certain occasions which appeal to our national vanity,



they are positively useless as remedies for that general drowsiness and indifference which fail to realize the dangerous insidiousness of Romanism. The spirit of Romanism being what it is, we cannot be too much alive, we cannot guard too carefully those interests which are necessarily jeopardized by the growth of Roman Catholicism. In all our dealings with Romanism let us always be true to those principles of liberty and justice which underlie our constitution ; but let us at the same time remember that we are dealing, not with an uncouth and uncivilized enemy who wastes his strength through want of discipline, but with a subtle foe who thoroughly understands the forces with which he has to deal, and who knows perfectly well how to use them.

In making these charges against Romanism, I am aware that it may with a degree of truth be said that if the Popes had been suppressed, Europe would not have had the advantages of the civilization of the middle ages. In this respect it is to be admitted that the middle ages performed an important part in the development of humanity ; but, in making this admis-

sion, we must never forget that if the human mind had been successfully fettered by the narrowness and superstition of that time, Europe and America would to-day be laboring under the evils of intellectual stagnation and groveling spiritual debasement. Instead of the freedom of thought and activity of enterprise which characterize modern civilization, we should have been under the shadow of a vast ecclesiastical empire, the existence of which necessarily involves the suppression of those qualities of mind and heart which give to modern culture its well-rounded completeness, its breadth of thought, and depth of feeling. Whatever the claims may be which the Church of Rome can urge on behalf of her usefulness during the middle ages, it does not require any extraordinary perception to see that were we at present living under the shadow of mediævalism we should be groping in dark corners and mumbling a few mechanical prayers where we now walk in the broad daylight and contemplate, with uplifted minds and hearts, the glories of God.

In the wise ordering of Providence, it was not, however, determined that mediævalism

should last for ever. Strong in the consciousness of her power, the Roman Catholic Church seemed fully warranted in saying, "I sit as a queen, and shall see no sorrow." But, notwithstanding appearances, an important change was at hand. In the fulness of time the age of the Reformation dawned upon the world. A new force was generated in the sphere of thought and feeling; and the human mind, awaking from its long sleep during the night of mediævalism, shook off its fetters, and moved forward in its magnificent career, conquering and to conquer.

Having for its conscious purpose the reforming of religion, the Reformation really went beyond this, and delivered human reason from the slavery under which it had groaned. According to Guizot, "it was an insurrection of the human mind against the absolute power of the spiritual order."

Indeed, it is not an exaggeration to say that it was Europe's grand age, from which sprung those vivifying forces which in due course of time rendered our national existence possible. Gladly would the Church of Rome have stran-

gled this new birth had it been able to do so ; but with all her strenuous exertions the effort to do so failed. Fortunately for the world the cradle of Protestantism was watched over by a Power which preserved it in its hour of peril.

Nor have we any reason to doubt that the same guiding hand which has led us through the intricacies of the past will also guide us through the dangers of the future. Clearly enough we are warranted in supposing that the Power which has guided Protestantism in the past will continue to guide it in the future. But in comforting ourselves with this assurance let us never forget that in the present and future, no less than in the past, much depends upon the use we make of the faculties which God has given us. Falling back on the comforting assurance that

“ There’s a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we will, ”

it is highly important that we should recognize at least a degree of truth in Napoleon’s remark, that “ Providence is always on the side of the strongest battalions. ”

In other words, while the result of the contest between Romanism and Protestantism is without doubt primarily in the hands of Providence, much can be done, and must necessarily be done, through those human means and agencies which come within our control.

That Romanism is an enemy to our institutions, all history and the declarations of leading Roman Catholics prove.<sup>1</sup> Stripped of all extraneous issues and all well-meant but misleading euphemisms, the question before us is a simple one, and ought to admit of no ambiguity or misconstruction. Unlike each other in aim and purpose, the spirit of Romanism tends in one direction, and the spirit of American institutions tends in another. Starting from entirely different conceptions of human nature and the conditions by which it is surrounded, the two tendencies are necessarily antagonistic and counteractive. Possibly they may co-exist for some time without coming into open collision ;

<sup>1</sup> As an illustration of the fact that Romanism is most suspected where it is best known and has been longest on trial, we have only to refer to the movement now going on in France for the diminution of the power and influence of the priesthood over the educational interests of the country.

but that the clash of forces can be permanently avoided is altogether too absurd an idea to be seriously entertained. To suppose such a reconciliation of opposites, is to set history at defiance, and to ignore the action of those irreversible laws which govern the conditions of human growth and development.

Of one thing we may at least be sure ; and that is that the pure and bracing air of Protestantism having made us what we are, it is only by keeping the atmosphere free from all forms of ecclesiastical malaria that we can hope to preserve our state of healthfulness, or realize the full measure of our possibilities. What we are is largely the result of that strong sense of individualism which underlies the Anglo-Saxon race. What we are yet to be will depend very much on the preservation of this strong sense of manliness accompanied by a determined resistance against all forms of imposture and sacerdotal arrogance.

As a means of defence against the encroachments of Romanism, we do not want any of that narrow bigotry which is no better than the evil it would seek to remove ; but we do need a

reasonable watchfulness which shall be consistent with the spirit of freedom, and which shall spare us the chagrin and humiliation of lamenting in the future over our present folly. In view of the immense advantages at present on the side of Protestantism, the most ordinary care and precaution will suffice to insure us against danger. But to accomplish this, *Vigilante* must be our motto.

Without this, Rome laughs at our boasted strength, and captures our outposts while we drowse and nod. By proving true to our trust as the inheritors of a movement which revolutionized Europe and laid the foundations of modern culture, we can easily defeat the machinations of Rome. Failing, however, in our duty, and proving ourselves unworthy of the golden opportunities which have been afforded us, we can confidently look forward to a result such as Mr. Froude describes, when he says : " So much only can be foretold with certainty, that if the Catholic Church anywhere recovers her ascendancy, she will again exhibit the detestable features which have invariably attended her supremacy. Her rule will be once



more found incompatible either with justice or with intellectual growth, and our children will be forced to recover by some fresh struggle the ground which our forefathers conquered for us, and which we by our pusillanimity surrendered." To some persons this may seem strong language to use in regard to a church which claims to represent the highest hopes and aspirations of the human race. But strong as the language is, it is justly applied nevertheless. Estimated according to its true character, and not according to the garb under which it appears to ordinary observers, Romanism is the natural enemy of certain principles which are inseparable from the welfare and healthy development of our national life. As such it ought therefore to be carefully watched, its designs understood, and its insolent pretensions kept under such restraints as our Protestant civilization, in the exercise of its sovereign powers, has the right to impose. It is one thing to conjure up imaginary evils, and make ourselves unnecessarily miserable ; it is quite another thing to look beneath specious appearances, and trace the operation of certain dangerous forces which are carefully

concealed in order to be more effective. In justification of the aggressive and suppressive attitude of the Roman Catholic Church, it is frequently claimed that it is only by the exercise of this kind of authority that society can be saved from disintegration and ruin. That this argument is, however, wholly unfounded, we have only to look at Roman Catholic countries to discover.

What Romanism really is we can easily determine by studying the condition of those countries in which it has always had absolute sway. If this does not dispel our illusions, nothing will.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### ROMAN CATHOLICISM AND MODERN CIVILIZATION.

WITHOUT questioning the fact that the world is governed by static no less than by dynamic forces, it must be conceded that there are times when the static force, if left to itself, would subvert the conditions of progress, and produce the most disastrous consequences. Again and again

history has furnished instances illustrative of this truth. But in no instance do we find a better illustration than in that persistent immobility which characterizes Roman Catholicism.

Growing out of the essential quality of unchangeableness which underlies the principles of Roman Catholicism, it is not only natural, it is inevitable, that the liberal and progressive spirit of modern civilization should be freely denounced and resolutely opposed by the Church of Rome. At one moment hurling its anathemas against the most advanced forms of scientific inquiry, at another time denouncing the aims of philosophy and culture, the Roman Church may well be regarded as the most uncompromising and most formidable enemy with which modern civilization has to deal. In a very important sense it is true that some of the weapons with which Romanism seeks to combat modern civilization are of such a character as to provoke a smile at their antiqueness and uselessness for the purposes of modern warfare. Singularly odd and comparatively harmless as some of these weapons appear, it must not, however, be forgotten that they are capable of being ren-

dered exceedingly destructive in the hands of a priesthood well skilled in the use of them. What is true of the Italian bishops and inferior clergy as to their ignorance and indifference is not true of the Roman Catholic clergy in those countries in which the conquest of Protestantism is the issue at stake. As matters now stand in Italy, there is good reason for believing that the Italian parish priest has made little or no progress since the time when, thirty-one years ago, the late Pius IX. said of them : " You may find here and there an honest and intelligent parish priest, but taking them as a body they are mere dirt."

The moment we transfer our observation to Protestant countries, the character of the Romish priesthood is, however, entirely different. There we see men of undoubted ability and untiring zeal, laboring for the domination of their Church. Setting before themselves the one great aim of their existence, these men bring to their task a heroism and devotion which ought to put the lazy indifference of most of our Protestant ministers to the blush. Working bravely under all conditions, these servants of Rome very

often accomplish more in a single year for their church, under adverse circumstances, than the fortunate possessors of fat Protestant livings accomplish for their church in a lifetime, under the most favorable conditions. What the weapons of Roman Catholicism lack in effectiveness is therefore more than counterbalanced by the energy, devotion, and consummate ability of those who use them.

Knowing perfectly well that a general diffusion of the principles of modern civilization would render it impossible for the Roman Catholic Church to maintain its present proud position, and knowing equally well that their only chance of successfully resisting the progressive spirit of Protestantism consists in their ability to undermine modern culture, it is not to be wondered at that the Romish priests are constantly busy in these directions.

If the anathemas of the Pope fall harmlessly at the feet of those against whom they are uttered, the writings of Newman, Manning, Spalding, Preston, and others are not without their effect on the minds of those who read them. If the thunder of the Vatican is merely

“*vox et præterea nihil*,” there is at least danger in those instrumentalities which the Church of Rome has at her command. And thus it is that if we dream of that happy state in which Roman Catholicism and modern civilization shall go hand in hand in their work of advancing humanity, we sadly mistake the nature of the issues which divide these two great forces. Separated by habits of thought which are as distinctly marked as the difference between Asiatic and European civilization, Roman Catholicism and modern civilization stand apart as the representatives of two distinct epochs in the world’s history. Not only are they unlike ; they are absolutely antagonistic and irreconcilable.

While the one appeals to us with the cold, sepulchral aspect of an age which has past, the other appeals to us with all the freshness and bright promise of a new life. It is true there is a sense in which every cultivated mind feels bound to respect the Roman Catholic Church for the good which she has accomplished in some directions ; but this ought not, and must not, prevent us from seeing that, as matters now stand, she is the natural enemy of those large



impulses and progressive tendencies which enter into the pulsations of the new age.

Were she contented to sit "like a widow in her weeds" beside the grave of the past, she would command a respect which none but the most ignorant and prejudiced would care to withhold. Notwithstanding the many blots upon the record of her life, no one would invade her sacred melancholy, no one would dare to deny her that affection of her children and respect of her enemies which the awful grandeur of her desolation would command.

In point of fact, however, this attitude on our part is utterly precluded by the present position of the Church of Rome. However much we may wish to

"Walk backward, with averted gaze,  
And hide the shame,"

we are compelled to pursue a different course as a means of self-preservation. From the standpoint of Romanism modern civilization has been fiercely denounced,<sup>1</sup> and the issue thus raised

<sup>1</sup> In proposition 80 of "The Syllabus of the Principal Errors of our Time," Pius IX. condemned strongly the principle which asserts that the Roman Pontiff can and ought to recon-



between the retrogressive spirit of Romanism on the one side and the progressive spirit of modern civilization on the other. It is the old story of priestcraft endeavoring to keep the world subject to such Procrustean methods as the priesthood may please to impose. In view of the boasted enlightenment of the nineteenth century, it may be unpleasant and somewhat humiliating to feel that we have not yet outgrown the conditions which render such an antagonism possible. Yet such are the facts, and, being facts, we can only recognize them and deal with them as intelligently as we can. Believing in the righteousness of its cause, modern culture demands that the human mind shall be allowed

cile himself to, and agree with, progress, liberalism, and civilization as lately introduced."

In the pastoral letters for 1877-1878, delivered by Cardinal Pecci, now Pope Leo XIII., the following strong language appears: "It is civilization that wants to restrict the number of churches and of sacred ministers, and which, at the same time, asks that places for the commission of sin be multiplied. It is civilization that clamors for theatres bereft of all sense and modesty. In the name of civilization all restraint is removed from the most exorbitant usury and from dishonest gains, and it is in the name of civilization, too, that a vile press corrupts the mind, and that art, prostituting itself, offends the eye with infamous statues, and opens the way to the corruption of hearts."

free scope and unimpeded action. Believing in its right of supremacy, Romanism denies to man the right to walk except with crutches furnished by the Church of Rome.

And thus the two forces antagonize at every point. In addition to their unlikeness, they are actuated by a latent hostility which only requires the friction of circumstances to kindle it into a blaze. Nor can we reasonably hope that this latent hostility will be set aside by the liberalizing tendencies of the present age.

Unless we are to allow our liberalism to degenerate into torpidity and indifference, there must always remain a profound difference between the aims of Roman Catholicism and the aims of modern civilization. No matter how great our latitudinarianism may be, there must always exist between these two forces a divergence so radical as to preclude the possibility of anything short of a sharp and decided antagonism.

What is life to the one is death to the other ; what is natural and congenial to the one is unnatural and distasteful to the other. In this connection I am aware that it is the habit of

some of the more advanced liberals to regard it as a matter of no consequence what a man's religious views are so long as he is a good citizen. But this, while true within certain limits, is not true absolutely and unqualifiedly. To any one familiar with the ordinary course of human affairs it will at once be evident that merely doctrinal differences count for nothing as indications or evidences of character.

Experience proves that in the great herd of rascals who sin under the guise of religious respectability, all denominations are but too well represented. On this point it would be dangerous for any church to attempt to cast the first stone. Unfortunately they are all tainted by a hypocritical rottenness, which makes good, earnest Christians hang their heads in shame. Without distinction as to creed, there are but too many hypocritical members in all churches, of whom it may truly be said—

“ When devils will their blackest sins put on,  
They do suggest at first with heavenly show.”

Or, *vice versa*, if we look at the brighter and more encouraging side of Christianity, it is

equally true that in the heart of many an honest doubter<sup>1</sup> there burns a flame as pure and bright as that which feeds the tranquil devotion of the unquestioning saint. Touched by the beauty of that ideal which has traversed the ages and defied the ravages of time, the honest doubter, no less than the submissive saint, bows down before the matchless purity and the beautiful spirituality of a truly Christian life. Before the sublime reality mere doctrinal differences disappear and sink into a state of comparative insignificance.

Once let humanity be brought under the influence of the cardinal teachings of Christianity, and it is of little consequence whether the effect is produced through a "sweet reasonableness" or the most rigid orthodoxy. Of course the difference of view necessitates certain distinctive features and traits of unlikeness; but this does not prevent the existence of a sameness and uniformity in the principles underlying these differ-

<sup>1</sup> "Perplex'd in faith, but pure in deeds  
At last he beat his music out;  
There lives more faith in honest doubt,  
Believe me, than in half the creeds."

TENNYSON.

ences. Not so, however, when we pass from the ever-fluctuating and comparatively unimportant differences between the various forms of Christianity to the permanent and essential unlikeness between Roman Catholicism and modern civilization. In this direction, the moment we attempt to form a comparison, we are met by conflicting forces which mean something much more vital and important than dogmatic differences and religious prejudices.

Despising those qualities of flexibility and adaptableness which render Protestantism the ally of civilization and progress, Romanism sets itself fairly and squarely against those principles without which modern civilization would be impossible. In fact, so sharp and decided is the antagonism between Romanism and the forces which generate the progressive spirit of the present day, that some Roman Catholic writers declare the evil consequences of Protestantism to be curable only through some special and miraculous interposition of Providence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "He has paid little attention to the extreme inconstancy and fickleness of the human mind, and studied its history to little purpose, who does not recognize in the event of the six-

Nominally Romanism and Protestantism represent the same cause, being both professedly Christian ; but really they are as far asunder as the poles. Where Romanism predominates, the shadows of mediævalism linger, and humanity moves tremblingly and hopelessly amid the darkness of its surroundings. Where Protestantism predominates, all things seem to have caught the fire of a fine enthusiasm,<sup>1</sup> which, although it does not render the world as good as it ought, is at least a decided improvement on the torpidity, emasculation, and unprogressive character of those countries under the domination of the Roman Catholic Church.

teenth century one of those great calamities which God alone can avert by a special intervention of his providence.”—  
“Protestantism Compared with Catholicity.” By Rev. J. Balmes.

<sup>1</sup> In this connection it must be conceded that we are bound to recognize the growth of Pessimism and its influence on the thought of the present age. As this creed of despair is, however, quite as much directed against Roman Catholicism as it is against Protestantism, it is manifestly unfair to charge the latter with being the cause of this gloomy philosophy. Pessimism is undoubtedly a strong, and to some extent a natural, reaction from the roseate optimism of the earlier part of the present century ; but it is not for this reason necessarily the destroyer of the faith and courage which are indispensable to Protestant civilization.



As an example of this we have only to look at Spain as the country best illustrating the predominance of Romanism—a country of which Buckle has well said : “ While Europe is ringing with the noise of intellectual achievements, with which even despotic governments affect to sympathize, in order that they may divert them from their natural course, and use them as instruments whereby to oppress yet more the liberties of the people ; while, amidst this general din and excitement, the public mind, swayed to and fro, is tossed and agitated, Spain sleeps on, untroubled, unheeding, impassive, receiving no impressions from the rest of the world, and making no impression upon it. There she lies, at the further extremity of the continent, a huge and torpid mass, the sole representative now remaining of the feelings and knowledge of the middle ages.”

Since Buckle wrote, there have undoubtedly been changes, owing to the persistent encroachment of progressive ideas. Even at this day, however, this country still illustrates in a marked degree the evil consequences of Roman Catholic domination.



In making these charges against Romanism, I know how much will be claimed on behalf of the Church of Rome for its usefulness in preserving every spark of learning which glimmered through the dark ages ; but as this is a subject on which it is easy to confound distinctions which are widely apart, it will be well for us to determine how much credit is really due to the Church of Rome for the preservation of learning during this dark period of the world's history. In other words, while we admit the debt which we owe to the monasteries for the preservation of manuscripts which have proved of immense value, it is important that we should discriminate between what is accidental and what is inherent in the matter of such preservation. At all events the result of such discrimination can hardly fail to convince us that had the Church of Rome possessed sufficient prescience to see that this preservation of learning would ultimately weaken instead of strengthening its authority, there can be little doubt that the world would have been left without any ray of light to illumine its darkness. In the interests of truth and justice it is eminently proper that

we should give the Church of Rome all the credit to which she is entitled ; but it is equally proper that we should distinguish between the sweeping claims which are frequently urged in defence of Rome, and the facts of the case as they really are.

Admitting that the ascendancy of mediæval Catholicity was a necessary step in the evolution of society, it by no means follows that we are to shut our eyes to certain inherent defects in the system. Let us even admit that Roman Catholicism in its earlier phases was not a tyranny because it was in accordance with the intellectual and spiritual wants of Europe at that particular time ; and the result, at least as far as our present purpose is concerned, is still the same.

To sustain our charge against the Church of Rome it is not necessary to attempt in any way to detract from those claims to which she is justly entitled ; nor is it necessary to deny that there is a sense in which Roman Catholicism laid the foundations of modern civilization. By consolidating the heterogeneous elements that succeeded the downfall of the Roman Empire, by softening slavery, and by infusing a new spirit

resting on the superiority of moral forces, the Church of Rome did at this particular time perform a great service to the cause of civilization and progress. The fact that the Church did at this time render good service to humanity does not, however, prevent us from seeing the many evils which have since followed in the footsteps of Romish predominance. It would indeed be strange reasoning to assert that because Roman Catholicism has done some good, it has therefore done no harm ; it would be nothing short of legerdemain were we to attempt to evade present issues by any such dexterous shuffling. Allowing that nothing but ignorance or a wilful perversion of history could induce any one to argue that the Church of Rome has no claims worthy of respect, it must be conceded that nothing short of wilful blindness can prevent us from seeing that the intelligent recognition of such claims is a very different thing from a blind veneration of everything connected with the Church's history.

Besides, it is especially worthy of our attention to remember that there is quite as much danger in attempting to magnify the virtues of

the middle ages as there is in attempting to emphasize too strongly the vices and intellectual poverty of those times. In order to understand the points at issue between Romanism and modern civilization, we are not called upon to deny any good which the Church of Rome can fairly claim ; we are simply called upon to deal with facts as they are, and, in the exercise of our privileges as rational beings, provide against what seem to us indications of danger.

In dwelling thus on the importance of the conflict between these contending forces, I do not mean to say that modern civilization, as at present constituted, is wholly good ; and that Romanism, as at present constituted, is wholly bad ; but I do mean to say that while the former represents the spirit of progress founded on the liberation of the human mind, the latter represents that spirit of ecclesiastical tyranny which burned Giordano Bruno and persecuted Galileo, and which would, had it the power, gladly revive the terrors of the Inquisition for the purpose of suppressing modern culture. Indeed, it is well for us to notice, in connection with this phase of the subject, that although the

monstrous evils of the Inquisition have repeatedly been exposed, there are not wanting defenders of these horrible atrocities among Roman Catholic writers of the present day. According to one of these writers the Spanish Inquisition was "the most legitimate and most natural exercise of ecclesiastical authority."<sup>1</sup> According to another it was an institution necessary "to ferret out and bring to trial" those who were engaged in "secret conspiracies" against "the Church and the State."<sup>2</sup> Again, Le Maistre, in his "Letters on the Spanish Inquisition," makes the startling assertion that "the Inquisition is, in its very nature, good, mild, and preservative. It is the universal, indelible character of every ecclesiastical institution; you see it in Rome, and you can see it wherever the true Church has power. . . . A sense of duty obliges me to say that an heresiarch, an obstinate heretic, and a propagator of heresy should indisputably be ranked among the greatest criminals. . . . I by no means doubt that

<sup>1</sup> "Plain Talk about the Protestantism of To-day." By Mgr. Ségur.

<sup>2</sup> Brownson's "Liberalism and the Church."

a tribunal of this description, adapted to the times, places, and characters of nations, would be highly useful in every country."

In quoting from Le Maistre it may perhaps be argued that the views therein expressed are over sixty years old ; but when it is remembered that these letters were translated into English by a Roman Catholic priest in this country, and published in Boston by a Roman Catholic publisher, in 1843, it will be easily seen that they are not irrelevant to our present subject. It is true these "impious and un-American" teachings have a strange sound in our ears, but this is no reason why we should underestimate their importance. Thanks to what the translator of these letters is pleased to call the "piratical and pharisaical Reformation," we are so situated that we can safely defy the demoniacal spirit of persecution which these letters express. In our security it is not, however, well that we should overlook the fact that all that the Church of Rome needs, to be as tyrannical as it ever was, is strength and opportunity. Given these two all important conditions, there can be little doubt that Rome would, as she has done before,



quench the lamp of liberty in blood, and suppress the manliness and energy which are the very life and soul of Protestantism. As truly now as ever, Romanism claims absolute supremacy over mind, soul, and body ; it respects no interest which conflicts with its own ; it admits the truth and usefulness of nothing except so far as it is consonant with, or subservient to, its own ends and purposes. Of all despotisms it is the most despotic ; of all bigotries it is the most bigoted ; of all tyrannies it is the most tyrannical. In speaking thus of the characteristics of Romanism, I am aware that there has always existed a party in the Roman Catholic Church to whom the imperious pretensions of the Pope have been distasteful. This, however, merely shows that the present dominant party in the Church of Rome has not attained its supremacy without a struggle. As far back as the pontificate of Nicholas I., we find strong words used against his imperiousness and impiousness ;<sup>1</sup> but the

<sup>1</sup> “ We doubt neither thy venom nor thy bite ; we have resolved with our brethren to tear thy sacrilegious decretals, thy impious bulls, and will leave thee to growl forth thy powerless thunders. Thou darest to accuse of impiety those who refuse from love to the faith to submit to thy sacrilegious



resistance of the Gallican bishops to the grasping ambition of this "sanguinary wolf" and "shameless cockatrice," while it proves the utter absurdity of the dogma of papal infallibility, does not prove that the Church of Rome would be less imperious or unscrupulous in the exercise of power to-day than she has been at earlier stages of her history. Inclination waiting upon opportunity is one thing, ability to act according to inclination quite another. Given the opportunity, Rome would do precisely what she always has done. What this, is a glance at the history of Romanism will easily show. Indeed, it is in view of this instinctive feeling as to the

laws ! Thou who castest discord among Christians ; thou who violatest evangelical peace, that immortal mark which Christ has placed upon the forehead of his Church ; thou execrable pontiff, who spits upon the book of thy God, thou darest to call us impious ! How, then, wilt thou call the clergy which bends before thy power, those unworthy priests vomited forth from hell, and whose forehead is of wax, their heart of steel, and their sides are formed of the wine of Sodom and Gomorrah ! Go to, these ministers are well made to crawl under thy abominable pride, in thy Rome, frightful Babylon, which thou callest the holy city, eternal and infallible ! Go to, thy cohort of priests, soiled with adulteries, incests, rapes, and assassinations, is well worthy to form thy infamous court ; for Rome is the residence of demons, and thou, Pope, thou art its Satan."—Cormenin, vol. i., p. 241.

unchangeableness of Rome's insolence and intolerance that we sympathize so heartily with Germany in her conflict with Ultramontaniam.

Thoroughly understanding the nature of the enemy with which she has to deal, Germany does not hesitate to strike fearlessly and resolutely. In fact, we may well regard the building up of the German Empire under Protestant Prussia as one of the greatest triumphs of the present age. It is a grand achievement, and as such ought to command the admiration of all who love the cause of intellectual liberty accompanied by a becoming sense of loyalty and heroic patriotism.

In the words of another, "Why is it that Germany has enlisted the sympathies of enlightened and cultivated men throughout the world in her conflict with Ultramontaniam? It is because she would maintain for the human mind that freedom of thought and development that Luther won at the Reformation. . . . Why is ecclesiastical tyranny the most hateful and hated of all? Because it binds its chains upon the mind. Other tyrannies can be broken by force of will, by the uprising of the mind; but

clerical tyranny palsies the will, and holds the soul in vassalage. The struggle with Vaticanism enlists my whole being only because I look upon this as the emancipation of man's spiritual nature from worse than material bonds."<sup>1</sup> Nor is this earnest language an exaggeration of the subject. We admire Germany not because she crushes the Roman Catholicism that nurtured the genius of Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Raphael, but because she bravely opposes the dangerous tendencies of that Ultramontane spirit which hates everything pertaining to the interests of modern civilization.

I know it is the custom of Roman Catholic writers to distort the facts connected with the present conflict in Germany, and to compare the struggle to that which afflicted the Church in the fourth century under the brutal old Emperor Diocletian. Between the persecution under Diocletian and the conflict under the Emperor William there is, however, such an obvious difference, that the argument based on such a comparison is really unworthy of notice.

<sup>1</sup> "The United States as a Nation." By Joseph P. Thompson. J. R. Osgood & Co.

It is perhaps true that Prince Bismarck is at times carried by his tremendous energy beyond the limits of discretion, but this is no evidence that the consolidation of the German Empire is made to depend upon the nefarious spirit of religious persecution. The animosity of the Jesuits toward Germany is nothing new, and it therefore is not to be wondered at that a mind as comprehensive as Prince Bismarck's should at once realize the danger, and meet it accordingly. Besides, it is well for us to remember that the Jesuits have been expelled no less than seventy times by different European governments—a fact which in itself ought to be amply sufficient to justify the attitude of Germany toward these dangerous political religionists at the present time. Of course, it was only to be expected that in clearing Germany of such noxious vermin, Prince Bismarck would incur the anger of a very large and powerful section of the Roman Catholic Church ; but notwithstanding the hue and cry about persecution, he has done no more than his duty ; and in doing this he has aided very materially that cause of culture and progress which ought to be dear to Protestants in every land.

In this country we are happily exempt from the perplexities growing out of the alliance between Church and State ; but the conflict between Romanism and modern civilization is not devoid of interest to us on this account. Situated as we are, there exist no outward signs of the colliding tendency of these antagonistic forces. But let us not be deceived by appearances. Indeed, there is a sense in which the absence of all noisy accessories is additional evidence that the conflict possesses for us a momentous importance.

Silently for a thousand years the oak grows amid the solitudes of the forest. Silently nature disseminates the seeds of life and death. Silently, and for the most part unobservedly, are generated those tremendous forces which convulse society and shake the foundations of the intellectual and moral world. On the show of false appearances let us not therefore allow ourselves to be misled by the idea that we have no interest in the conflict in Europe growing out of the imperious demands of Rome and the sweeping claims of papal infallibility. We have outgrown the days which rendered the terrors of

the Inquisition possible ; but we have not outgrown the necessity of keeping a constant and vigilant watch on Rome as the enemy of science, intellectual liberty, and a broad, progressive culture. Knowing perfectly well that the advancement of knowledge and the liberation of the human spirit cannot now be arrested by persecution and torture, Roman Catholicism has adapted itself to the new conditions. What it cannot accomplish by force it seeks to accomplish by stratagem. Realizing, with its usual sagacity, the immense value of striking opportunely and covertly, there is little likelihood that the Church of Rome will dare at present to make a bold and undisguised attack on those cardinal principles of freedom on which our institutions rest. This, however, is no evidence that there exist no elements of danger. Always on the alert for every contingency that may arise, the Roman Catholic Church is to-day a perfectly organized power, watching and following every movement of its adversary. What it has lost by the overthrow of its temporal power it seeks to regain by a diligence and subtlety which are almost without parallel in history. Whether it will succeed or



not in accomplishing its purpose will necessarily depend upon the manner in which the defenders of modern civilization understand the questions at issue, and the means they employ for defending the interests of liberty and progress. Whether there are or are not certain elements of attraction connected with the Roman Catholic Church is, in view of the wide range of the issues at present involved, a matter of secondary importance. As I have already pointed out, it is not my purpose to join those narrow bigots who would deny to Roman Catholicism those claims to which it is justly entitled. Quite as much as the most devout Roman Catholic I admire the characters of Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Charles Borromeo, and others who deservedly occupy a prominent place in the Romish Church. I will even go further and say that it is impossible to contemplate the sweet purity and zealous devotion of some of the best representatives of the Roman Catholic religion of the present day without realizing the ineffable beauty of that charm which brings the best life of mediævalism into the living present.

As is obvious, however, there is a great differ-



ence between individual members who challenge our admiration, and the general tendency of a religious faith which saps the foundations of our intellectual life, and dwarfs the measure of our possibilities. It is not what Roman Catholicism has done, or can do, under exceptional circumstances, but what Roman Catholicism is as to its essential quality, that chiefly concerns us. To understand clearly the questions at issue between Romanism and modern civilization, we must separate the extrinsic from the intrinsic, we must keep clear of that fatal confusion of ideas which very often confounds distinctions which are radically distinct and irreconcilable.

If we dwell with pleasure on the virtues of Saint Charles Borromeo, we ought also to remember that the religion which produced him also produced the priest Fra Farina, who attempted to assassinate this holy man while he was celebrating the evening service. If we admire the humility, abnegation, and tenderness of Saint Francis of Assisi, we must not forget that the poverty which he espoused had been, according to Dante, a widow for eleven hundred years. It is certainly eminently proper that we should

yield our willing admiration to those beautiful souls within the pale of the Roman Catholic Church whose example is indeed a beacon light amid the storms and discouragements of life ; but it is highly improper to confound what is exceptional with what is general. In the treatment of our present subject it is a matter of secondary importance whether there are or are not individual members in the Roman Catholic Church whose zeal and purity put the majority of Protestants to the blush ; but it is a matter of primary importance whether or not there is such an inherent antagonism between the essential principles of Roman Catholicism and the essential principles of modern civilization as to render reconciliation impossible.

Of course it is possible, as experience proves, for these two antagonistic forces to co-exist ; but to suppose that the interests of the one can be advanced without injury to the interests of the other, or that they can co-exist for any time without coming into collision, is to suppose an impossibility.

Carried out to its logical consequences, Romanism reduces man to intellectual and spiritual

slavery ; it is dogmatic, imperious, and unprogressive. Properly understood, modern civilization is the expression of the mind's best energies blossoming under the sunshine of intellectual freedom and spiritual liberty. Not only are these two forces unlike each other in spirit and purpose : they are absolutely irreconcilable in their antagonism ; and in view of this fact claim our special attention in dealing with our present subject.

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## CHAPTER V.

### NATURE OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN ROMANISM AND PROTESTANTISM.

FOLLOWING the line of thought suggested in the preceding pages, and endeavoring to separate as carefully as possible merely superficial differences from those which are radical and essential, it is perhaps important that we should examine still more closely the nature of those opposing forces which render Romanism and Protestantism the natural enemies of each other. That there are differences existing between

these two systems seems to be generally regarded as a fact admitting of no dispute. But the trouble is, these differences are not sufficiently realized as to their depth and far-reaching character. We are too apt to treat the subject superficially ; and, in doing so, we necessarily fall into a slovenly habit of thought which blunts our perceptions and enfeebles our judgment. In the exercise of our ordinary powers of observation we cannot help seeing that there does exist an antagonism between Romanism and Protestantism ; but such is the measure of our obtuseness that we do not see in its true light the importance of the consequences involved in the conflict between these two forces. Failing to understand Romanism as it is, we simply regard it as a hoary system of error which we can easily afford to treat with contempt, thus strengthening our adversary in the display of our ignorance. In other words, having blundered in the past in regard to the meaning and designs of Romanism, we still continue to rub our drowsy eyes and gape at vacancy. Persistently regarding Romanism as a comparatively harmless form of religion, we fail to see that, to be properly

understood, it must be regarded as a vast ecclesiastical system claiming absolute supremacy over man's spiritual and intellectual nature.

In fact, so sweeping are the claims of the Roman Catholic Church, that the *orbis Romanus* of antiquity is a mere dwarf compared with the pretensions of the Roman pontiff. Ambitious as ancient Rome was, we look in vain for anything which even approaches the present audacious claims of the Pope as the head of the Church.

It is true the importance of ancient Rome sunk itself so deeply into the minds of the early Christians, that we find some of the Fathers of the Church regarding the subversion of the Roman dominion as the precursor of anti-Christ, and the signal for the final catastrophe in the world's history. But what is this compared with the blasphemous presumption which induces Roman Catholic writers to claim for the Pope equality with God?<sup>1</sup> In reality the present claims of the Papacy are of such a character as

<sup>1</sup> "It is not our will, it is the will of God, whose place we occupy on earth."—His Holiness, Pope Pius IX. By M. J. Rhodes.

to admit of no limit whatever. In promulgating the dogma of infallibility the late Pope placed himself and the Church of Rome in a position which admits of no question. Under the guise of spiritual authority he laid the foundations of an *imperium super imperium*, the like of which the world has never known before.

In a council packed with Ultramontanes, and dexterously governed by that intriguing spirit which is the leading characteristic of Ultramontanism, Pius IX. had himself declared the infallible head of the Church, and as such the superior of all governments. In dealing with this subject, it is of little use for Romanists to argue that the dogma of infallibility is nothing new, and therefore ought not to excite any alarm. To some extent it is undoubtedly true that "the doctrine of pontifical infallibility, theologically considered, is intimately connected with the pontifical supremacy; and considered historically it is seen that from the exercise of the supremacy was gradually evolved and finally asserted the prerogative of infallibility." It is perhaps even true that the definition by the Vatican Council "has only added the extrinsic cer-



tainty of universal promulgation, binding the whole Church to believe the dogma explicitly." Clearly enough it is possible for us to acquiesce in both these propositions without in the least removing the most objectionable features of infallibility.

From the moment Pius IX., amid the ominous darkness and thunder of heaven,<sup>1</sup> had himself proclaimed a god, and insisted on being so recognized under pain of everlasting anathema, the civilized world has had a momentous question thrust upon it which it cannot avoid if it would. No matter whether we associate infallibility with impeccability or not. Standing alone the doctrine of infallibility claims exemption from all those conditions which render change necessary. Standing alone it aspires to rule the world, and in the measure of its claims far exceeds everything in the way of arrogance and presumptuous-

<sup>1</sup> The moment had arrived when he was to declare himself invested with the attributes of God—nay, a God upon earth. Looking from a distance into the hall, which was obscured by a tempest, nothing was visible but the golden mitre of the Pope; and so thick was the darkness, that a servitor was compelled to bring a lighted candle and hold it by his side, to enable him to read the formula by which he deified himself." —New York *Tribune*, August 11th, 1870.



ness that has gone before it. In spite of all the ingenuity and sophistry which have been employed in its defence, it is really a very dangerous doctrine, which cannot be too carefully watched and guarded against.

According to Dr. Dollinger, "it imposes upon those who accept it the solemn obligation to violate civil law, to set themselves in opposition to the ordinances of government whenever the Pope shall pronounce his infallible judgment against any one of those ordinances upon moral or religious grounds." As an offset to this unpleasant outlook it is useless to argue, as is sometimes done, that the infallibility of the Pope applies only to "faith and morals."

From its very nature infallibility such as the Pope claims must be absolute. Indeed, it is declared by a very eminent Roman Catholic authority to be so, "inasmuch as it can be circumscribed by no human or ecclesiastical law."<sup>1</sup>

To the same purpose also speaks the formal decree of anathema pronounced on all who deny that the Roman Pontiff has "full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the universal Church,

<sup>1</sup> The Vatican Council and Its Definitions. Manning.

not only in things which belong to faith and morals, but also in those which relate to the discipline and government of the Church spread throughout the world." In this connection it is true that Pius IX. no longer occupies St. Peter's chair, while it must also be conceded that his successor has shown some signs of being less under Ultramontane influence. This, however, is really no reason why we should expect to see the Romish Church suddenly undergo a radical change for the better. Pius IX. is gone, but Rome remains. She is "ever the same." She may bend, but she will not break. She has the rare faculty of waiting and watching, but we deceive ourselves if we suppose that the old spirit is ever really asleep. Knowing the value of opportunity, Romanism may seem to slumber, but in that seeming slumber there is very often more danger than there is in a direct and open attack. Here, as in other respects,

"Appearances deceive,  
And this one maxim is a standing rule—  
Men are not what they seem."

Of course, I do not pretend to say that the present Pope is not sincere in his desire to make

certain improvements within the Church ; but a momentary glance at the history of Romanism ought to be sufficient to convince us that reformation within the Church does not mean the removal of those characteristics which render Roman Catholicism obnoxious to Protestants. Neither does reformation within the Church of Rome mean the relaxation of those energies which are constantly on the alert to check the growth of Protestantism. Besides, the simple fact that Leo XIII. is not an Ultramontane is by no means sufficient to warrant us in thinking that the death-knell of Ultramontanism has sounded. The present Pope may be perfectly sincere in his desire to inaugurate a conciliatory policy, but it is not too much to say that the unscrupulous and crafty spirit which controlled Pius IX. will in the end assert its supremacy under the new pontificate. In fact there is a certain intimacy and interdependence between Ultramontanism and the Romanism of the present day which renders it necessary that the policy of the Pope should be governed, if not primarily influenced, by the Ultramontane party. In reality, the present logic of the Roman Cath-

olic Church leads irresistibly to Ultramontanism, and it is therefore idle for us to suppose that the efforts of Leo XIII., however well intentioned, are about to relieve us of the dangerous aggressiveness and insolent pretensions of the Ultramontanes. What is known as Gallicanism in the Church of Rome is so nearly defunct that little or no assistance can be expected from that quarter. Gradually but surely Ultramontanism has obtained the ascendancy, and there can be little doubt that it means to retain it. As far as any voice in the government of the Church is concerned, Gallicanism is practically reduced to silence ; while Ultramontanism seeks to set its foot defiantly on the neck of the State, and in the insolence of its pretensions repudiates all that has been accomplished through the benign influences of Protestantism. In the discussion of our present subject it matters not whether or not there is a large party among the Roman Catholic laity which has no sympathy with the arrogant claims of the Ultramontanes. In its present conflict with Protestantism, Roman Catholicism is undoubtedly directed by the narrowness and intense hatred which Ultramontan-

ism is known to have for liberty in all its forms. While the Church of Rome has always been opposed to the advancement of liberty, it is characteristic of it, under the present Ultramontane domination, that the feeling of hatred toward liberty has been intensified, and the antagonism rendered more uncompromising and aggressive. Calling to its aid the crafty policy of the Jesuits, it does not hesitate to invade the most cherished principles of freedom and the most sacred and inalienable rights of the individual. In the striking words of Bishop Coxe of Western New York : “ The whole tree is deadly. The serpent nature of Jesuitism finds in it its congenial abode, embraces the whole trunk with its folds, and uplifts its subtle head triumphantly amid the branches. Let us understand, then, the nature of the new Romanism, which the Jesuits are planting so vigorously in our great cities, and more especially in the West. It is not the Romanism of Bossuet. By a cunning economy, Carrol and Cheverus, who were fine specimens of that school, were first sent over to beguile us with delusive ideas of a possible conformity with republican institutions. Now we have cardinals

and archbishops, one and all the bond-slaves of Jesuitism ; not one of them, not even Kenrick of St. Louis, who alone has uttered a manly word, daring to say his soul and conscience are his own. Every one of them is committed to the Syllabus ; all reduced, by their oaths to the pontiff, to make themselves the mere emissaries of a power which is the sworn enemy of every free thought, and above all of every constitutional government ; to which Cavours and Washingtons alike are damnable ; which intrigues to overthrow the French Republic, and refuses the last sacraments to those who pray for King Humbert and Victor Emmanuel. The Papacy is no more, it is true, what it has been ; but as the symbol of Jesuitism its tiara and keys are not less formidable than before. ‘Romanism will survive Rome ;’ and this survival is the phenomenon which theologians and statesmen should now meet with new weapons, and contend with unto the death, as the common enemy of truth, morality, and enlightenment.”<sup>1</sup>

Nor does this strong language place the subject in an exaggerated light. Unwelcome as

<sup>1</sup> *Princeton Review*, March, 1878.

this language may be to some persons, the facts are precisely as Bishop Coxe states them. It certainly is not pleasant to feel that the society which Clement XIV. set his face against, and whose maxims he pronounced in his pontifical brief as "scandalous, and manifestly contrary to good morals," is rapidly growing in influence among us. But the fact still remains, unwelcome though it be.

Of course, it is possible that Jesuitism may carry the policy of Rome too far, and that in its designs there may exist that "vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself," but we sadly mistake the present attitude of the Church of Rome if we suppose that it contemplates anything short of a complete dethronement of Protestantism. Quite as well as we do they know the present strength of Protestant civilization. But this only furnishes them a greater incentive to press forward in their work of subversion through Jesuitical agencies. No matter whether there is any chance of immediate success or not. This is not properly the question before us. Even if it should take Rome a hundred years to make any important change in the quality of our na-



tional life, this surely does not relieve us from those duties which belong to the present time—duties which are certainly neglected when we leave our Protestant privileges to take care of themselves, as though, by some magical power, they possessed that which grants them perpetual immunity from danger.

Looking around us and realizing the strength and bright promise of that movement which has so completely changed the face of the world within the last three hundred years, it would be absurd to suppose that Romanism can at once demolish those principles which now form the very life and soul of our national existence. But it is by no means an absurdity to suppose that Romanism can, by a well-directed system of insidious attacks, gradually undermine those foundations on which now rests the fairest temple ever consecrated to the cause of liberty and progress.

In dealing with the present growth of Roman Catholicism and the relation which it bears to the interests of Protestant civilization, I am aware that there is a sense in which the Church of Rome presents itself to us as one of those

bridges of thought and feeling by which the present is connected with the past. And as this is a phase of the subject which may mislead us, we cannot too carefully distinguish between that hoariness of Roman Catholicism which commands the respect of all unprejudiced minds, and that dangerous subtlety by which Roman Catholicism in its old age seeks to destroy Protestantism in its youth. Closely identified with the cultivation and progress of art, and in many instances the beacon-light of hope and encouragement to the weary and broken-hearted, we cannot shut our eyes to the memories and associations which cluster around the name of the Church of Rome. To attempt this would be to outrage our better nature, and at the same time to injure our own cause by refusing to recognize and admit the truth. In making these concessions to Roman Catholicism, we do not, however, exonerate it from the charge of having been the enemy of liberty in the past, and of being at the present time the great adversary of those principles without which the continued success of our government is impossible. Treating it, as to one side of its charac-

ter, with that philosophic impartiality which recognizes that all forms of religion are deserving of respectful consideration, we are bound to treat it, as to the other side of its character, with suspicion, caution, and a careful preparation against danger.

Representing in some respects the gradual evolution of the human mind in its dealings with the awful problem of eternity, it also represents the gradual establishment of a sacerdotal tyranny which has sought at every opportunity to crush the rising spirit of liberty, and to keep the world under the bondage of priestcraft and superstition. And herein—in this latter characteristic—lies the real cause of the antagonism which every earnest Protestant feels toward the encroaching power of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Properly understood, popery is, as Milton says, “a double thing to deal with ;” and in view of this fact it is not to be supposed that Protestants can sit tamely down and accept its growth without remonstrance or resistance. In other words, Romanism having usurped the privilege of governing, and then proceeding to govern on the strength of its usurpation, it is es-

entially of such a character as to preclude the possibility of reconciling it with those principles of freedom and energy which are the necessary concomitants of our national life.

As a matter of fact, what we need to keep before our minds is that Romanism is the enemy of progress and enlightenment, not so much on account of this or that particular doctrine, but because it is as a system opposed to the Divine mandate, "Let there be light."

Steadily, and it must be said wisely, adhering to the conviction that priestly domination requires ignorance and superstition as conditions essential to its growth and perpetuity, it is both natural and inevitable that the Church of Rome should seek to give the world an impetus which, if unchecked, would carry it in an entirely different direction from that which the interests of progress and culture demand. From the nature of things this must be so. Nor will it do for us to suppose that Romanism is in this respect less dangerous now than it was when the Pope's temporal power was in the meridian of its glory.

To use the words of another: "It must never be forgotten that Rome's temporal power was

probably not diminished, but rather extended, by the loss of the miserable Italian temporal sovereignty which is often ignorantly confounded with it. She can now claim to be more 'eminently spiritual' than ever. She is vigorously pushing her interests in every direction, sapping constitutions and fomenting the jealousies of states. She is aiming at a Royalist restoration in France, and dazzling the malcontents of Ireland by the prospect of thereby rescuing them from the jaws of 'perfidious Albion.' She is seeking, in insulting defiance of the Treaty of Union, to establish her hierarchy even in the country of John Knox, that she may there further her propagandism, and at least place Scotch Romanists under canon law, governing them as a community within a community, directly from Rome, in all matters pertaining to marriage, burial, vows, prison discipline, mortmain, and the like. In view of all this, the greatest vigilance is required. Rome's crooked policy has always been a thorn in the side of states; and never has it been more dangerous than it is to-day." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Princeton Review*, March, 1878.

Indeed, if we carefully consider the subject it will be easily seen how thoroughly the policy of the late Pope succeeded in alienating Rome from all those tendencies which make up the spirit of modern thought. Stone walls and a foreign prison may have severed other popes from the Roman people, but never before did any Pope so completely separate himself from surrounding conditions, or so presumptuously set the spirit of the age at defiance. Weak in his intellectual character, and as bold in dogma as he was timid in action, Pius IX. has left us a Romanism which is even more impudently bold and uncompromising than anything the history of the Papacy has ever exhibited before. By its refusal to recognize any good in the progressive spirit which has liberated Italy and consolidated Germany, the Church of Rome has placed itself in direct opposition to two of the most important events of modern times, while it has also, by the vehemence of its anathemas, manifestly shown how readily it would enslave the world, had it the power to do so.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to Dr. Hodge, "One of the encyclical letters of the present Pope so openly denied the liberty of conscience,



Of course, the Church of Rome has the unquestionable right to oppose anything which conflicts with its interests ; but when, as in the present conflict between it and Protestantism, the issues are of such a character as to strike down to the very root-principles of freedom and allegiance to the State, it is high time that we realize the meaning of those Romish encroachments at which a vapid indifference stares vacantly and unmeaningly. That Romanism is not as powerful in some respects as it has been at other stages of its history is perfectly true. But to lay aside Protestant vigilance on this account is to commit an act of short-sightedness which cannot fail to produce disastrous consequences. Powerless as the thunder of the Vatican is in comparison to what it has been, the Church of Rome still retains its old character. Surrounded by a wall of dogmatism which excludes all those influences that have given to

the liberty of the press, and the lawfulness of tolerating any other religion than that of Rome, that the late Emperor of the French forbade its publication in France ; yet the Archbishop of New York read it in his cathedral to an immense and approving audience.”—*Systematic Theology*, vol. iii., p. 561.



Protestantism its progressive tendency, the Church of Rome occupies a position which means, as far as Protestantism is concerned, nothing short of untiring and uncompromising opposition.

As an answer to this, and as an explanation of the causes of this antagonism, it avails nothing for Roman Catholic writers to urge that the Church of Rome, being the repository of truth, is necessarily right ; while Protestantism, being “ simply absurd, and, what is worse, sinful,” is as necessarily wrong.

Unfortunately for the advocates of Romanism, this impudent assertion is not sustained by facts. It is simply a repetition of that insolent air of imagined superiority which has characterized the Church of Rome in all ages, and is glaringly at variance with the facts of the case. It would perhaps be asking too much to ask Roman Catholic writers to concede to Protestantism all that it is justly entitled to ; but surely it is not asking too much to ask them to seek new weapons in the armory of facts instead of wilfully perverting history in order that they may maintain an untenable position. Even if

we abandon the well-founded claim that the Reformation gave a new impetus to the world by enlarging the horizon of human thought and aspiration, the indictment against Roman Catholicism is fully sustained by testimony which cannot be contradicted.

For the sake of argument we will admit that there may have been some ground for the complaints of Erasmus as to the diminished interest in literature under Protestantism. Having conceded this, we do not, however, set aside those facts which show themselves to any one who compares those countries under Roman Catholicism with those countries under Protestantism. It is quite possible for Protestants to admit, without injury to their cause, that there was a time when the Lutheran movement, in view of its intense religious earnestness, affected adversely those studies in which Erasmus and the Humanists took special delight. But it is not possible for Roman Catholicism to face the charges which can be proved against it, without feeling that its impudent assertions are unfounded.

In support of these charges against the Church

of Rome it would be possible to furnish many witnesses, but for our present purpose we will content ourselves with listening to one who certainly cannot be accused of narrowness or bigotry. "The loveliest and most fertile provinces of Europe," says Macaulay, "have, under her rule, been sunk in poverty, in political servitude, and in intellectual torpor, while Protestant countries, once proverbial for sterility and barbarism, have been turned by skill and industry into gardens, and can boast of a long list of heroes and statesmen, philosophers and poets. Whoever, knowing what Italy and Scotland naturally are, and what, four hundred years ago, they actually were, shall now compare the country round Rome with the country round Edinburgh, will be able to form some judgment as to the tendency of papal domination. The descent of Spain, once the first among monarchies, to the lowest depths of degradation; the elevation of Holland, in spite of many natural disadvantages, to a position such as no commonwealth so small has ever reached, teach the same lesson. Whoever passes in Germany from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant principality, in Switzerland from

a Roman Catholic to a Protestant canton, in Ireland from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant county, finds that he has passed from a lower to a higher grade of civilization. On the other side of the Atlantic the same law prevails. The Protestants of the United States have left far behind them the Roman Catholics of Mexico, Peru, and Brazil. The Roman Catholics of Lower Canada remain inert, while the whole continent round them is in a ferment with Protestant activity and enterprise. The French have doubtless shown an energy and an intelligence which, even when misdirected, have justly entitled them to be called a great people. But this apparent exception, when examined, will be found to confirm the rule ; for in no country that is called Roman Catholic has the Roman Catholic Church during several generations possessed so little authority as in France.”<sup>1</sup>

In these remarks it will be seen that Macaulay presents, with his usual perspicuity, the characteristic difference between Romanism and Protestantism. While the one, in its inertness, impedes the course of progress, the other, in

<sup>1</sup> History of England. Harper's edition, vol. i., p. 45.

obedience to its active and masculine tendencies, moves forward like Alexander seeking new worlds to conquer. By candidly and impartially examining the facts of the case, we are led to the irresistible conclusion that Protestantism infuses strength, hope, and aspiration into those nations under its influence ; whereas Romanism, in its vast immobility, overshadows the mind, and would have the world move forward only on the crutches of ecclesiastical dogma. As an answer to these statements it may perhaps be urged by Roman Catholic apologists that the golden age of Spanish literature was the age when Protestantism was most completely crushed, and the Church of Rome enjoyed unlimited power.

That this is so is not to be denied ; but before we form any hasty conclusion on the strength of this fact, it will be well for us to look at the other side of the picture. If this was the golden age of Spanish literature, it was also the period of decay. Being without the essentials of permanence, the blossoming period soon gave way to that spirit of lethargy which inevitably follows the undisputed sway of ecclesiastical

tyranny. Referring to the books published in this period, Ticknor says: "They bore everywhere marks of the subjection to which the press and those who wrote for it were alike reduced. From the abject title-pages and dedications of the authors themselves, through the crowd of certificates collected from their friends to establish the orthodoxy of works that were often as little connected with religion as fairy tales, down to the colophon, supplicating pardon for any unconscious neglect of the authority of the Church, or any too free use of classical mythology, we are continually oppressed with painful proofs, not only how completely the human mind was enslaved in Spain, but how grievously it had become cramped and crippled by the chains it had so long worn."<sup>1</sup>

Turning from this, how different are the conditions under the glorious Elizabethan age? Here we witness not merely a brief period of blossoming, and then a long and barren winter relieved from its death-like silence only by what Taine calls "the infantine or snuffling voices of the middle age." Instead of this, new forces

<sup>1</sup> History of Spanish Literature, vol. i., p. 470.

are generated, a new impulse is given to humanity, and the world moves forward with the freshness of youth and the vigorousness of manhood. From that age the glorious constellation comprising Spenser, Shakespeare, Bacon, Hooker, and Raleigh still looks down upon us, its brightness undiminished by the march of time and the distance of centuries. Coming into existence under circumstances which, taken in connection with the mystery of genius, explain the secret of its power and influence over the modern world, the age of Elizabeth proves conclusively the value of those tremendous energies which rendered the Reformation possible. It sustains the views urged on behalf of a large and comprehensive culture as one of our principal needs ; while it also, in demonstrating the supreme value of intellectual forces, strengthens our previous charges against Romanism as the enemy of liberty and progress.

From its very nature, Protestantism is compelled to keep pace with the march of ages and the growing demands of the human mind ; whereas Romanism is always the same in its narrowness and its immobility. While the one



enlarges, expands, and acquires additional strength with every triumph of man's intellectual powers, the other growls sullenly in its dogmatism, wanting only the power to crush the rising spirit of liberty and progress. While the one is intolerant, inflexible, and uncompromising, the other adapts itself to the needs of progressive thought, and in its tolerance and flexibility furnishes the strongest evidence of its suitableness to an enlightened nation. It is unfortunately true that Protestantism has in some instances given rise to an ecclesiastical tyranny as unjustifiable as that which is charged against Rome ; but even with this admission in view it is not to be denied that there have always been certain forces at work within the bosom of Protestantism which have preserved those catholic and comprehensive principles so essential to modern culture and our progress as a nation. Indeed, it is precisely because Protestantism has clearly discerned the true relation of Christianity to culture and civilization, that it commends itself most fully to all intelligent minds as the religion of an enlightened and progressive people. That it has much to learn

and much to unlearn no one will deny ; but that it has immense and numerous advantages over Romanism is to any candid mind so clear as to admit of no dispute.

I know it is the fashion for some who are not avowed Romanists to call Protestantism a failure, and to accuse it of being “ an ocean of conjecture ;” but as writers of this class present the extraordinary phenomenon of being really Romanists while they are nominally Protestants, it is needless to add that their arguments are unworthy of consideration on account of their inconsistency and insincerity.

By these writers the religious world is divided into three bodies—the Roman Catholic, the Catholic, and the Protestant ; they professing to belong to the second of these bodies. Disregarding the essentially Protestant character of the Church of England, and therefore also of the Episcopal Church in this country, they allow their Ritualistic zeal to carry them into a position which, if true, leaves the Reformation responsible “ without excuse for the great schism of the last three hundred years.” Had they the power, these Ritualists would gladly sacrifice

the grand principles of the Reformation to their ceremonial forms, 'their genuflections, and the color of their ecclesiastical petticoats. Placing the extrinsic above the intrinsic, and the accidental and subsidiary above the permanent and essential, these zealots leave out the most important facts in connection with the growth of Protestantism and its influence on the church to which they nominally belong.

"But," says a writer in one of the ablest foreign quarterlies, "the great crises of history are sufficiently characterized by their consequences, and by the broad facts which accompany them and follow them; and, judged by this test, there can be no mistaking the nature of the prolonged crisis in European affairs which is designated as the Reformation. In no country whatever, and still less in Europe at large, was it a mere question of the removal of abuses or the correction of theological inaccuracies. . . . After a period of hesitation, not unworthy of a nation which was capable of realizing the gravity of the issue, and which could appreciate the truths to which both parties were attached, the whole force of England was thrown on the

Protestant side. It was Elizabeth's supreme merit, amidst whatever doubts or weaknesses, to choose, and to choose decisively, one side in the contest, and that the Protestant side ; and the story of the Spanish Armada marks the crisis at which England was finally recognized as the head of the Protestant nations of Europe. Another long period of wavering succeeded ; but even through the Stuart times the Protestant connection which had been established by Elizabeth was too strong to be broken ; and Charles II., in order to regain his crown, found it necessary to pledge himself, in the most unreserved language, to the support of the Protestant religion. . . . At the present moment her Majesty holds her crown by a statutory title, which prescribes that the sovereigns of England must be descended from the Protestant branch of the royal family ; and every monarch, in the coronation service, is pledged to maintain ' the Protestant Reformed Religion established by Law.' In a word, the history of England, from the time when the division between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism was finally established, has been united with that of Protestantism

and of the Protestant nations ; and, so far as the nation at large is concerned, that union is irreversible. . . . When the clergy abjure Protestantism, they will abjure all sympathy with one of the primary movements of English life ; their church will cease to be the Church of England, and they will sink into the condition of an Ultramontane priesthood amidst a contemptuous laity.”<sup>1</sup>

For the quotation of this article I make no apology, as it bears directly on the inconsistency of Ritualists in this country in their attempts to depreciate Protestantism. Here, as in England, Protestantism is an essential condition of national life and national greatness, and it is therefore for us to see that we do not allow transient and unimportant issues to conceal from us the supreme value of certain underlying principles which cannot exist if dissociated from Protestantism. In fact, if we keep before our minds the relationship existing between this country and England, it will be easily seen that, although we have not an established church, we cannot too carefully guard those interests which the Church

<sup>1</sup> *London Quarterly Review*, October, 1878.

of England represents. Whatever dissimilarity may exist between the two countries in other respects, they are at least alike in the fact that they both have a vital interest in the preservation and perpetuity of Protestantism as an essential condition of national life and national growth. Without Protestantism our own greatness and that of England would have been impossible. Without a continuation of those energizing forces which came into the world with the dawn of the Reformation, the future of both countries will almost certainly end in "a lame and impotent conclusion." Under all circumstances let us therefore see to it that we cultivate that masculineness of thought which is the life-giving power of a great nation, and which at the same time shall warrant us in exclaiming in the consciousness of our strength—

“ Here the free spirit of mankind at length  
Throws its last fetters off ; and who shall place  
A limit to the giant's unchained strength,  
Or curb his swiftness in the forward race ?”

## CHAPTER VI.

### OUR NATIONAL IDEAL, AND ITS RELATIONS TO ROMANISM AND PROTESTANTISM.

ACCEPTING it as true on general principles that what we strive to be determines to a great extent what we already are, it follows that the quality of the ideal is a subject of no less importance to nations than it is to individuals. In both instances the same forces are constantly at work, building up an edifice not made with hands, but infinitely more enduring than the strongest material substances could make it. In the one instance, as in the other, there is no escape from those laws which encompass man on the spiritual side of his existence ; and which, even amid the confusion, anomalies, and contradictions of history, reveal themselves as the great determining forces of individual and national greatness. In the wise ordering of events, these conditions are absolutely inseparable from human life. They are in no sense arbitrary and irregular ; they are in the strictest sense natural



and uniform. To suspend their action is out of our power ; to study them for the purpose of understanding them is our manifest duty.

As the result of the inequalities of society and the unequal division of this world's advantages, it is true that a very large portion of the human race is compelled to drag its weary way along without having either time or capacity for understanding the relations between the real and the ideal. But the relation exists nevertheless. Because ignorance, poverty, and vice exclude the glories of the intellectual world, they are none the less real on this account. It is perhaps in some respects unfortunate that the light emanating from the intellectual world should require, in order to be properly perceived, a clearness of mental vision which every one does not possess. But surely the light is for this reason no less real or beneficent in its nature. Groping our way for the most part in the dark, even the best of us rarely do more than accomplish very little. It may even be admitted that as often in despondency as in hope the greatest minds are cast back upon their insufficiency and inadequacy of power. Indeed,

such are the laws of human development, that it sometimes happens that the strongest intellects are driven in their distraction to the gloomy conclusions of pessimism and despair. There is truth as well as sadness in Matthew Arnold's poetry, when he says—

“ And though we wear out life, alas !  
Distracted as a homeless wind,  
In beating where we may not pass,  
In seeking what we shall not find.”

But this does not destroy the beauty or the value of that ideal world in which cultivated nations as well as cultivated individuals live, move, and have their being. Under certain conditions the ideal seems, from its remoteness and apparent unattainableness, to be nothing more than a mocking delusion. But even this does not destroy its value as a means of culture. In the sphere of our spiritual consciousness, as in the sphere of our intellectual consciousness, it is not so much what we attain as what we endeavor to attain that makes us strong and healthy. Plato, realizing that success in the pursuit of knowledge is secondary to the advantages derived from the act of pursuing, has pro-

foundly defined man as "the hunter of truth ;" and the same conditions apply to man as an aspirant seeking the realization of a nobler and better life. In the pursuit of the ideal, as in the pursuit of knowledge, we must necessarily encounter many difficulties and disappointments. But it will not do to mistake temporary discouragement for permanent unfitness and disqualification. In proposing to ourselves the question, What is truth ? we know perfectly well that our intellectual powers cannot do more than furnish an answer which shall be approximately correct ; but we do not on this account abandon the inquiry and sink into despair. Discouraging as the outlook sometimes is, we still persevere, and in our perseverance very often overcome difficulties which at first sight appeared insuperable.

We sometimes grow weary and dispirited, but we never give up the pursuit. Nor should we, in our pursuit of the ideal, be any less earnest and persistent. No matter what our discouragements may be, the necessity of cultivating the ideal is quite as great as the necessity of cultivating the intellectual.

Or, to put the same thing in another form, it is quite true to say that the one necessarily embraces the other ; for as the intellectual cannot be perfect without the ideal to encourage and sustain it, neither can the ideal be perfect without the intellectual on which to rest the foundation of its hopes and aspirations. In point of fact, the two forces are interdependent and equally essential to human development. Nor do we overestimate the value of this interdependence and its indispensableness to civilization and culture, when we state that the principle applies to nations quite as much as to individuals.

In the larger life of the nation, as in the smaller life of the individual, the same forces are constantly at work. And thus it is that in treating the subject of Romanism we cannot too clearly realize the influence which it is likely to exert on the character of our national ideal.

If, as a nation, we are merely drifting listlessly down the stream of time without any definite aim and without an intelligent appreciation of those conditions which govern the ideal side of our life, we may rest assured that it will not be

very long before we reap the consequences of our folly and indifference.

If, however, on the other hand, we are still governed by the principles of manliness and heroism which gave us our national existence, we may equally rest assured that the existence of these principles involves the existence of an ideal which shall fitly express the bright promise of our youth and the far-reaching possibilities of our manhood. Nor can we define too clearly what this ideal is, and what are the conditions by which its value may be enhanced or impaired, as the case may be.

Freeing ourselves as far as possible from the din and confusion which characterize the daily life of this busy metropolis, let us endeavor to realize as clearly as we can the importance of the ideal and its necessary influence on our attainments in the present and our hopes for the future. To do this is not to separate ourselves from the stern realities of life, or to rise in utter forgetfulness of our duties to a state of perpetual tranquillity,

“ Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a wind,  
Nor ever falls the least white star of snow.”

To accomplish our purpose we need something more than a lofty indifference which separates us from the great current of human life and "the still sad music of humanity." Without in any way separating ourselves from the stern realities of life by which we are surrounded, it is possible for us to rise through a proper appreciation of the ideal to a wider and deeper conception of our responsibilities and privileges. Without undervaluing the real, we can certainly correctly estimate the importance of the ideal and the function it performs in the development of our national life ; we can certainly appreciate the great value of those forces which govern the higher life of humanity.

In other words, the appreciation of the ideal does not necessitate the depreciation of the real ; it simply requires that we, as intelligent beings, should properly understand the conditions by which human life is governed. In dealing with the ideal which relates more particularly to art, it is well enough for us to say with Taine, that "we then think of the vague and beautiful dream by which is expressed the deepest sentiment ; we scarcely breath it in the lowest voice,

with a kind of subdued enthusiasm ; when we speak of it otherwise it is in verse, in a canticle ; we dwell on it reverentially, with clasped hands, as if it concerned happiness, heaven, or love." In dealing with the ideal which relates to our higher consciousness and the quality of our individual and national life, we must, however, go beyond this, and attempt an analysis of the elements of which this ideal is composed. In doing this we are not called upon to cast aside the mantle of tenderness which art throws around its ideal ; but we are called upon to understand as clearly as we can why our ideal is what it is, and what are the conditions on which its growth in strength and beauty depend.

As I have already said, we cannot expect to bring the real up to the ideal, even if we succeed in obtaining a clear and definite idea as to its character. This is, however, no reason why we should not endeavor to understand it. There is a sense in which the impossibility of the ideal is its strongest recommendation ; but there is also a sense in which the success of the real depends very largely upon a proper appreciation of those forces which relate to the higher consciousness of humanity.



And it is precisely in this sense that an examination into the conditions governing our national ideal is, in view of our present subject, of such great importance

Passing over all the extraneous and incidental issues growing out of the relation between the real and the ideal, we are, in dealing with the subject before us, brought face to face with a fundamental principle which we cannot set aside if we would, and which we ought not to set aside if we could.

Touching, as it does, many of our highest and most vital interests, the question comes before us as one which we are bound to consider.

As a nation we owe our existence to certain broad and comprehensive principles which, after having struggled through the ages, found at last their fitting expression at our birth. Between our birth and the ages preceding it there is no hiatus, no break in the chain of cause and effect, no unnatural revolution bringing us to the surface and leaving us there to be ultimately lost amid the conflicting waves of ignorance and passion. Instead of this, we are what we are because we represent in an advanced form cer-

tain principles which have always been in harmony with the unfolding powers of the human mind no less than the progressive instincts of humanity. And as in the past so in the present.

It is a mistake to suppose that in the great march of human events there is any such thing as fortuitous circumstance ; it is a still greater mistake to suppose that the great current of our national life moves otherwise than as it is impelled by its own inherent force and the nature of the tributary streams which supply it. And herein lies the necessity of our understanding where we stand in regard to our ideal and its probable influence on our future. In reality, no less than in appearance, are we jealously guarding those principles of courage, faith, hope, and moral strength, without which there can be no true greatness either in an individual or a nation ? In reality, no less than in appearance, do we realize the tremendous responsibility of our opportunities and privileges ?

Rising above the vulgarism that contents itself with the beating of drums and an occasional pyrotechnic display, are we cultivating the only conditions on which our welfare and stability

depend? In this respect there can be no middle ground, no neutral territory where the forces that dwarf and degrade us, and the forces that elevate and ennoble us, can lay down their arms in amity and indifference. If we are not in harmony with conditions which render us progressive, we most certainly are in harmony with conditions which render us retrogressive. From this there is no escape; and there ought to be no mistake respecting it.

Without in the least depreciating the material conditions which have contributed so largely to make us what we are, there is every reason why we should seek below the surface of things for that more important life which touches the silent depths of our spiritual consciousness. It is true the movements of this life are for the most part noiseless, but this is, when properly considered, the strongest evidence of their tremendous power.

Silent as is the movement of those influences which relate to our intellectual and spiritual life, they are nevertheless supremely potent in their character, and deeply significant in their consequences.

They touch us in that part of our individual and national consciousness which, besides being the most sensitive, is immeasurably the greatest and most powerful force in the formation of our character and the determination of our possibilities in the future.

Nations, like individuals, cannot rise above themselves. They may seem for a moment to be carried upward and onward by the waves of circumstance ; but this is simply an evanescent state which the inexorable conditions of law and order are sure in the long run to reverse. For a time shams may, and do, flourish ; but, just as surely as the night follows the day, they are sure in due course of time to be stripped of their borrowed plumage, and left to hobble along on their crutches as best they can.

To be really great, we must do more than strut in borrowed feathers, swaggering as we strut, that bluster may be mistaken for strength. Realizing that every sham is an abomination which we cannot hate too strongly, we need to enter into a careful examination of those principles which, besides being the foundations of character, are also the strongest arguments in

favor of a progressive ideal. The more fully we realize these facts, the more clearly will we see that "the world is governed by its ideals." The more thoroughly we realize that "the world is governed by its ideals," the more clearly will we see that we, as a nation, are under certain responsibilities which we cannot escape from. And here we come to the direct question as to the measure of influence which Roman Catholicism exerts on the ideal side of our life.

In answering the question we touch the very pith and marrow of our subject. And this for the following reasons: First, because the ideal side of our life is, as I have already attempted to show, of supreme importance; second, because the Roman Catholic Church, with its usual shrewdness and foresight, knows perfectly well that if it can only capture the ideal, it is only a question of time how soon it will capture the stronghold of the real. To the mind of this Church there exists no such thing as a great gulf separating the ideal from the real, and rendering them practically independent of each other. Indeed, it is precisely in this direction

that the Church of Rome exhibits most fully its wonderful sagacity in seizing upon opportunities which Protestantism fails to perceive.

Of course, there is a sense in which the intensely practical character of Protestantism is of more value to the world than the intellectual insight which enables us to realize the importance of the ideal. But, in admitting this, we must not forget that as long as we are inferior to the Church of Rome in our appreciation of those influences which lie beneath the surface, we inevitably endanger to a great extent our present supremacy. Unaccustomed as we are to dwell on the importance of those influences which emanate from the higher sphere of our intellectual and spiritual consciousness, we are too apt to overvalue the noisy and the unreal, and to undervalue the noiseless and the real. Instead of placing the spiritual above the material, we reverse the conditions, and thus disqualify ourselves from forming a clear and intelligent judgment as to the nature of the forces by which human life is governed. In the hurry and excitement of the present age we seem to have lost in a great measure the capacity no less than



the desire for introspection. We vote, wrangle, and prostrate ourselves before the shrine of Mammon; but we do not realize that one mighty intellectual and spiritual influence is of infinitely more importance than the monetary fluctuations of Wall Street, or the changes in the political arena in Washington. Forgetting that the success of republican institutions depends very largely on the quality of the intellectual and spiritual forces which they assimilate, we seem to think that we have discharged our duty when we have launched these institutions into existence, and left them to take care of themselves as best they can. That we are suffering to-day from this mistaken view is, I think, beyond question. And therefore it is that in the treatment of our present subject it seems to me essential that we should consider the influences of Romanism and Protestantism on the character of our national ideal. If, through either ignorance or indifference, we allow the Roman Catholic Church to so far seize upon the thoughts and feelings of our educated classes as to become a power in the formation of their ideal life, we may depend upon it we are



placing ourselves in a position which will cause us much trouble hereafter. Once let this Church become sufficiently powerful to impress itself upon the minds and hearts of those who wield the sceptre of intellectual sovereignty, and it amounts to a foregone conclusion that a change in the aims and purposes of our national life will be inevitable. As an answer to this it may be argued that it is precisely in this direction that Roman Catholicism has least chance of success. But is this really so? Admitting that intellectual activity is *per se* a guarantee against the dangers of Romanism, is it not at the same time true that there is a sense in which the massive conservatism of the Roman Church appeals very powerfully to many educated minds? Bewildered and wearied, as many of these minds are, by the conflicting opinions which at present characterize the intellectual world, is it not true that in some instances there exists a strong desire to cast anchor in those tranquil waters where scarcely a ripple disturbs the surface, and where "the strife of tongues is hushed in submission to a voice which asserts its own infallibility?" That such instances are not very

numerous is happily true ; but the fact that they exist at all is quite sufficient to indicate to us the power no less than the seductiveness of Romanizing influences. Inconsistent as the statement may appear, it is nevertheless a significant fact that the very conditions which give to the present age its earnestness and comprehensiveness are precisely the conditions which increase the opportunities of Romanism. If modern culture is characterized by an intellectual unrest and activity which insure us against stagnation, it is also characterized by a feeling of sadness which the Church of Rome is not slow to perceive and act upon. Beneath the resoluteness and zeal which grapple with the mightiest problems as though the responsibility of their solution rested solely on the present age, there exist certain pessimistic tendencies which Rome knows perfectly well how to utilize. With a strange comingling of hope and despair, modern culture takes up the problem of human life. It does not rush headlong into the pessimism of Schopenhauer or Hartmann ; but it does hesitate as to the real value of life and the ultimate triumph of virtue over vice. And herein lies the danger

of those encroachments of Roman Catholicism which, without helping the solution of the real difficulty, produce a state of apparent rest and satisfying repose.

While we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that Romanism appeals principally to ignorance and superstition, it will not do for us to lose sight of the fact that modern culture is not invulnerable.

Without in any way disparaging the intellectual activity of the age in which we live, it will not do for us to overlook the dangers of that reaction which this activity sometimes produces. While we may safely acknowledge that Romanism has its uses as a centripetal force, we must not allow it to so far control our ideal life as to substitute emasculation for energy. While we cannot deny that the present state of the intellectual world is one of storms and sudden changes, we must not allow ourselves to be misled by the idea that the apparent calmness within the Roman Church is a reliable indication of peace and rest. Notwithstanding appearances, the real truth of the matter is that under the Roman aspect of Christianity there exists a very

much larger area of infidelity than is to be found under Protestantism.

But this does not remove the danger of those appearances which give to the Church of Rome its attractiveness as a haven of rest for all who are weary and discouraged. Nor do we properly understand the situation if we suppose that the Roman Church contents itself with pursuing a merely passive policy in this direction. On the contrary, the ablest Roman Catholic writers are constantly on the alert for these attacks, and never miss an opportunity to make them. As an example of this, the following language of Cardinal Pecci, the present Pope, may be of some service. Says this authority : " On the one hand we see multitudes robbed of every hope of the future, of every consolation that faith brings to the unfortunate ; multitudes who can find no compensation in the pleasures of this world, too poor for their desires, and too full of miseries and contrasts ; on the other, a small number of men on whom fortune smiles, who have not the smallest spark of Christianity in thir souls, and bent only on hoarding and enjoying. We see, on the one hand, men trembling

with despair and who seem to have gone back to the savage state ; on the other, obscene pleasures, dances and festivities, that excite the indignation of the poor man who is not succored, and which provoke the chastisement of heaven. These are the gains promised us ! This is what this open warfare against the Church promises us, and it is destined to throw us back again into the horrors of barbarism.”<sup>1</sup>

It is true this is nothing more than a general and sweeping indictment of modern civilization ; but, such as it is, it clearly indicates the course which the Roman Catholic Church intends to pursue. Knowing perfectly well that modern culture, being the outgrowth of Protestantism, will never listen to terms of compromise or surrender, Roman Catholics know equally well that plausible appearances and the dexterous use of opportunities very often accomplish a great deal.

With these facts in view it is therefore for us to determine how far we can allow the quality of our ideal to be influenced by conditions which lead us in the wrong direction. Growing out of

<sup>1</sup> “ The Church and Civilization.” By Cardinal Pecci, now Pope Leo XIII. P. O’Shea, New York.

the interdependence between the real and the ideal, and realizing at the same time that our safety depends upon our powers of intellectual and moral resistance against all forms of sacerdotal tyranny, it is manifestly our duty to look this matter in the face, and make our choice according to the dictates of reason and sound judgment.

In accordance with our professions of liberty, equality, and justice, we are bound to extend to the Roman Church the same privileges which we allow to others ; but we are not bound by either liberty, equality, or justice to permit Roman Catholicism to pursue its insidious methods of attack unchallenged. It is one thing to allow to all men the right to choose any religion they please ; but it is quite another thing to allow a church as dangerous and powerful as the Church of Rome to sow the seeds of dissolution and destruction among us without doing something to check the evil in its stages of incipency. In regard to our ideal life particularly, let us not suppose that Roman Catholicism can grow in power without producing disastrous consequences. If as a nation we mean to follow what



is noble and progressive, we cannot too soon realize that the growth of Romanism is not conducive to the attainment of this end. As I have already said, there are conditions under which Roman Catholicism appeals very powerfully to the most highly gifted and intellectual, but this does not render it a desirable influence in the shaping of our ideal as a nation representing Protestant principles and Protestant aims and purposes. Looking around us and seeing the political debasement and corruption by which we are surrounded, we may at times feel depressed and discouraged. But it will not do for us to abandon all faith in republican institutions because these discouraging conditions unfortunately exist. It may be true that "a debased and irresponsible suffrage is the source of our troubles;" but in admitting this we do not necessarily scatter the value of republican institutions to the winds. It is quite possible that if we continue "to fling the suffrage to the mob," we shall be committing an error; but it is at the same time both possible and proper to separate the question of universal suffrage from the larger and more important question growing



out of the intellectual and spiritual influences underlying our national character. Even if universal suffrage be an admitted failure, the words used by Washington on his retiring from the Presidency still possess a profound significance. "This government," said he, "the offspring of our choice uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support." These words were true at the time of their utterance, eighty years ago ; and they are true to-day. We have grown older, but we have not outgrown the conditions which give them their significance. Since Washington's time we have passed through many trials, and have grown wiser through experience ; but under all the trials and changes which have been witnessed by us, the great underlying fact that the nation is governed by its spiritual forces still remains. Unchanging and unchanged, this fact towers in majestic grandeur above the petty strifes and changes of politics.

It does not depend for its existence on the caprices and devices of politicians and demagogues ; it does depend for its existence on those irreversible laws which govern the world and determine the orbit of humanity. " The Government of the United States is no longer an experiment ; nor is the nation on probation. That the nation shall decline, and linger on in slow decay, or give place to some fresher stock and another type of civilization—all this may be written in the Book of Fate. But this would only repeat the lesson of history—that the permanence of no civilization is guaranteed, either by political forms, by social institutions, or by conditions of race and territory. Unless there be in the people a spiritual and moral life, working in and through their economic forms toward ever higher and nobler ends, and making the strength of justice and peace their safeguard against outward invasion, then nothing can keep a nation hale with the growth of centuries." <sup>1</sup> In the wise ordering of events the existence of this fair Republic seems in an especial manner

<sup>1</sup> " The United States as a Nation." By Joseph P. Thompson, D.D., LL.D. James R. Osgood & Co., Boston.

to be dependent on the use we make of those forces which relate to our higher consciousness. We possess many advantages which other nations have not ; but we are also, from the very nature of our institutions, peculiarly liable to certain influences which other nations are in a position to regard with less concern. It has been said by Guizot that " Asia is the continent of origination, Europe the continent of differentiations, and America the continent of reunions ;" and this perhaps expresses the fundamental difference which separates us from the older continents. In a very important sense this is " the continent of reunions ;" and for this very reason we are liable in an especial manner to dangers from which Asia and Europe are in a measure exempt. In estimating our place in history it is not enough for us to dwell exclusively on the advantages which we derive from that freedom from prejudice and room for development which render Guizot's remarks applicable to us.

We must do more than this ; we must remember that only as we cultivate a pure and lofty ideal can we rise to a proper appreciation of our

opportunities and privileges. If we are ever to attain that greatness which time cannot destroy, we can only do so by keeping before our minds an ideal which shall strengthen us in intellect, purify us in character, and bear us upward and onward in the development of those principles which are the true bases of Protestant civilization. Above all things let us remember that while we are largely indebted to Rome for the preservation of the beautiful, it will not do on this account to allow certain dangerous encroachments which threaten to undermine the very foundations of true greatness and real progress. As in the Prometheus, none but the demi-gods Strength and Force could chain the Titan, so, in the development of our national life, nothing but strength of character and clearness of purpose can save us from the dangerous tendencies of Romanism.

To be really great we must be muscular in thought as well as in action, and instead of cultivating an ideal which appeals vaguely to our emotional nature, we must keep before our minds a distinct and living reality which shall have strength enough to guide and strengthen

us in our trials and temptations, and which shall also be sufficiently vigorous to insure us against the domination of priestcraft and the evils of intellectual poverty.

Keeping constantly in view the important fact that the progress of a nation does not depend so much on what it has accomplished as on the continuity of those processes by which it became progressive in the first instance, it is for us to maintain at all hazards the principles which give such grandeur and significance to the initial point in our history. Conscious of the responsibilities which rest upon us, it is our duty no less than our privilege to demonstrate to the world that we are not unworthy of our opportunities. Conscious of the importance which attaches to the influence of the ideal, it is for us to show that, notwithstanding our political corruption and degeneracy, there still exists in the mind and heart of the nation an earnestness and resoluteness which will not permit the dethronement of those principles which give to Protestantism its masculineness and strength of character. Realizing that our healthy growth as a nation demands a fierce and incessant warfare against

many vices which now threaten us with disgrace and possible ruin, let us also realize the supreme value of that intellectual and moral heroism which would rather lay down its life than bow down before an unworthy ideal.

Should Romanism ever succeed in making a sufficient number of converts among the educated classes to give it a controlling power, we may indeed have fewer discords and fewer anxieties as to the deeper questions of human life and human destiny ; but it is well for us to remember that in such an event we should exchange the activity of life for the stillness of death and the silence of the grave. Undoubtedly Protestantism has produced an agitation which will in all probability leave the world unsettled for a very long time ; but surely this is better than submission to an ecclesiastical despotism which crushes the intellect and enslaves the conscience. Better a thousand times that we should conquer through perplexity and temporary failure rather than to give ourselves up to an enervation and emasculation which strike at the foundations of true greatness and real progress. Whatever the faults and shortcomings of Protestantism



may be, let us under all circumstances remember that it is Protestantism that has made us what we are, and it is therefore to Protestantism that we must look for the hope and courage on which our future so largely depends. From this source, and not from Romanism, must come that pure and lofty ideal which shall guide us through the difficult problems of self-government. From this source, and not from Romanism, must come that broad and comprehensive culture which shall fit us for our place in the vanguard of civilization, and which shall also encourage other nations to press forward in the cause of liberty and progress.

Threatened as we are at the present time by the encroachments and machinations of the Roman Catholic Church, it is for us to show that we are resolute in our determination to maintain our Protestant privileges and the advantages which necessarily accompany them. No matter what our discouragements and perplexities may be, let us always remember that the muscular development produced by Protestantism is infinitely better than the emaciation and enervation inevitably produced by the opiates of Rome. Under the



shadow of Romanism we may become a peaceful and a plodding people ; but if we are ever to rise to the full measure of our possibilities, we need something more than the enervation and emasculation which are the inseparable companions of Roman Catholic ascendancy.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

PASSING from the consideration of certain specific points in relation to Romanism and its influences on our institutions, it may not be amiss, before dismissing our subject, to examine in a general way the principal points at issue, at the same time that we endeavor more fully to satisfy ourselves as to the importance of the consequences involved. As I have attempted to show, the growth of the Roman Catholic Church is not a subject which appeals to us in the same manner as the growth of any other religious denomination.

In point of fact Romanism is a vast and overshadowing system, combining "two governments that ill assort ;" it is ambitious, unscrupulous,

subversive, and insidious ; and as such cannot be regarded otherwise than with suspicion. Knowing perfectly well the value of cunning accompanied by fair pretences, the Church of Rome carefully conceals her methods, and in a measure disclaims any movement against our institutions. But this only serves to increase the danger. Under any circumstances the Roman Catholic Church would be the natural enemy of the principles which underlie our theory of government. But when we properly understand her methods it is easy to see that the danger is largely increased, because the appearances are so strongly calculated to mislead us. What we could easily subdue in an open contest, it requires the utmost vigilance and foresight to deal with under conditions which place candor and magnanimity at a disadvantage. Applying to the Church of Rome the same principles which we apply to other forms of religion, we have certainly acted in the only manner consistent with our professions as a free and enlightened nation. But in this respect it will not do for us to be deceived. What we have done is the only consistent thing that we could have done under the

circumstances ; but it is of no use for us to conceal the fact that we have, in so doing, rendered possible an evil which may yet cause us to regret that we did not at an earlier date understand the real spirit of Romanism and its incompatibility with American institutions. It is true that even if we had understood Romanism better we would not have been warranted in adopting extreme measures for its repression. In addition to the injudiciousness of such a course, the fundamental principles of our national polity would have been quite sufficient to prevent us from adopting coercive measures.

It is one thing, however, to proclaim a war of persecution against a religion ; it is quite another thing to see to it that the Protestant principles which underlie our national life are properly protected against the encroachments of a church which enslaves the conscience and seeks to keep the world in a state of perpetual servitude under an imperious ecclesiastical despotism. No matter what the grandeur of its ritual may be, no matter how many may be the attractions which it presents to the emotional side of human nature, it is our imperative duty to un-

derstand that the growth of Roman Catholicism is incompatible with the enlargement of our interests as a nation. Without being in any way narrow or bigoted, every Protestant ought to realize the intimate connection which exists between the liberty of thought which Protestantism contends for, and the spirit of freedom which our government represents. Any thing which injures the one necessarily injures the other. In fact, so close is the connection, that they may be said to be absolutely interdependent, and incapable of growth if dissociated.

In stating this I am aware that Protestantism has not always been free from the spirit of intolerance which characterizes the Church of Rome. But while we admit this, we do not set aside the fact that Protestantism has been the great progressive force which has operated on the world during the last three hundred years. Among Protestants, Lutheran has been persecuted by Calvinist, Calvinist by Lutheran, Puritan by Churchman, and Churchman by Puritan. This, however, is only equivalent to saying that there have been times when Protestants did not understand the true character of Protestantism.

Notwithstanding these instances of narrowness and persecution, the genius of Protestantism has always been opposed to intolerance and bigotry, and has, by the spirit inherent in it as a system, gradually worked out its legitimate consequences by cultivating enlarged views in all things pertaining to life and religion. Not so, however, with the Church of Rôme. In regard to the revolting cruelties practised by that Church, while there may be some humane Roman Catholics who would, if they had the power, condemn the action taken by their Church in many instances, there is no ground for supposing that the authorities of the Roman Church feel any compunction for the employment of those instruments of torture and coercion which even at this distance cause us to shudder as we think of them. Indeed, so far removed is the feeling of the Romish priesthood from any thing like compunction for past persecutions, that the oath taken by all who are elevated to positions of official dignity in that Church renders it compulsory to "*persecute and oppose all heretics, schismatics, and rebels*, who shall stand in the way of making the rules of the holy fathers, the apostolic decrees,

ordinances, or disposals, reservations, provisions, and mandates, the foundation upon which all human institutions shall rest." In other words, although the world may grow older in wisdom and experience, and human opinions be subjected to the laws of change, Rome must ever remain the same, unchanging and unchangeable.

Starting out with the imperious assumption that the Church of Rome is the sole repository of truth ; intolerance, persecution, and immobility become component parts of her system as naturally and inevitably as the night follows the day. By a dexterous mode of reasoning this Church endeavors to make it appear that it is adapted to all forms of government and all stages of civilization. But this is only one of its many attempts to accomplish by bold assertion what cannot be sustained by facts.

What the Church of Rome seems to be upon its surface is very different from what it really is. Superficially considered, it has attractions which draw toward it many earnest and cultivated minds. Apparently steeped in a religious sentiment which expresses the best spirit and the last enchantment of the middle ages, it is only



natural that this Church should exercise a wonderful influence over many who prefer the gentler emotions of a poetic dream to the stern realities of life and duty. To the beautiful fascination of this charm no intelligent Protestant would venture to raise an objection. It may not possess an equal value with that stern discipline which Protestants value so highly. But it does represent one of those needs of man's emotional nature which it would be simply barbarous to undervalue. Where this feeling is the dominating influence over the lives of those who belong to the Roman Church, let no one attempt to interfere. It may be a mistaken form of religious expression ; but it is nevertheless a beautiful outgrowth of the soul's aspiration. And as such it ought to command the respect which it deserves.

Turning, however, from these phases of the subject, and reverting to the real question involved in the dominating influence of the Church of Rome, we easily discover that when we properly understand Roman Catholicism as a system it reveals an animus which clearly shows it to be the enemy of freedom and progress. What it



has been in the past it still is. What it now is it will always be. Adapt itself to the enlarging conditions of human life it cannot ; resist them it must and will. The hopes and expectations which cause the great heart of humanity to throb with delight are the very conditions which tause the Church of Rome to separate herself more and more from the progressive tendencies by which she is surrounded. Uncompromising in her isolation, she is equally unyielding in her opposition to every thing modern and progressive. Every thing that conflicts with the all-embracing claims of the Papacy is denounced as emanating from "the powers of darkness" and "the gates of hell."<sup>1</sup> And thus it is that there necessarily exists a sharp and deadly antagonism between the interests of Romanism on the one hand and the interests of Republicanism on the other.

\* 1 "It is our belief that a most dreadful combat, a most awful conflict between the powers of good and evil, is in the near future, and that the fate of this Republic depends on the result. The powers of darkness which are symbolized by 'the gates of hell' are angered at the steady progress of the Catholic Church here, and all the ingenuity of hell is at work to perfect plans for the legislative persecution of Catholics.—*Catholic Herald*, May 24, 1879.

The fact that we are comparatively safe to-day is no evidence that we may not be *in extremis* to-morrow.

Of course, it would be folly to suppose that there can be such a thing as an uprising of Romanism without the causes of such an uprising being dependent on conditions at present existing among us. Recognizing, as every intelligent person must, the inevitable sequence between cause and effect, such an idea is manifestly out of the question. But the case is very different when we examine the facts, and find that, notwithstanding our false sense of security, there do exist many evidences that Romanism is increasing its power in a very real and very natural manner. Instead of waiting for some special dispensation of Providence on which to rise into power, the Church of Rome makes the most of its opportunities in obedience to the principle that Providence generally helps those who help themselves. While we pursue the delusion that Protestantism is unassailable, the process of undermining our institutions goes steadily on. Stealthily but surely the Roman Church presses on with its work,

while we in the superabundance of our self-conceit look calmly on and think that no harm can come of it. Instead of realizing, as we ought, that the quality of our national life is primarily dependent upon the quality of the intellectual and moral forces which enter into it, we seem to think that we can enjoy an immunity from danger because we are led by vulgar demagogues to believe that we are even more invulnerable than Achilles.

And thus we abuse our privileges, and sink into an apathy which must, unless remedied, sooner or later produce consequences injuriously affecting our interests. The fact that Romanism is not likely to overthrow our institutions by a sudden attack is no excuse for our refusing to give the subject the attention which it ought to command. The fact that it seems almost impossible for the average American to understand the importance of those undercurrents of religious thought which underlie national character, is only the greater reason why the subject ought to be fearlessly and forcibly presented. Besides, there is such definiteness and directness in the statements of Roman Catholic writers that it

seems almost like insanity to postpone the discussion any longer.

Says one of these authorities in reference to this subject : " Protestantism, like the heathen barbarisms which Catholicity subdued, lacks the elements of order, because it rejects authority, and is necessarily incompetent to maintain real liberty or civilized society. Hence it is we so often say that if the American republic is to be sustained and preserved at all, *it must be by the rejection of the principle of the Reformation and the acceptance of the Catholic principle by the American people.*"<sup>1</sup> To the most casual reader these words are so clear as to admit of no possible misunderstanding. They indicate clearly that the Roman Catholics mean no compromise, while they as clearly suggest the importance of Protestants awaking to a sense of their duty. But it may be asked, Of what use are these protests against Romanism if it is unwise as well as unjust to adopt extreme measures? The existence of the question only proves, however, how general is the confusion in regard to some of the most important functions of citizenship. Fol-

<sup>1</sup> The *Catholic World*, September, 1871.

lowing the absurd idea that we cannot oppose any thing pertaining to our intellectual and spiritual life without conflicting with the professedly catholic spirit of our institutions, we seem to forget that there is a great difference between a wise precaution and an unwise intolerance. In calling attention to the dangers involved in the growth of Romanism, I have not the slightest idea that we could remedy the evil by resorting to extreme repressive measures. In addition to the fact that "the reformer who becomes in his turn a bigot is doubly odious," extreme measures generally defeat themselves, and cannot therefore be recommended.

The case is very different, however, when we deal with the subject in a comprehensive spirit, and, in place of the narrowness of repression, adopt the only measures consistent with our professions and our place among the enlightened nations of the earth.

To accomplish this it is not necessary to deny to Romanism certain rights which it possesses in common with other forms of religion ; but it is necessary to define our position so clearly as to leave no doubt concerning our intention to de-

fend our liberties against all forms of ecclesiastical tyranny and priestly domination.

In view of the circumstances and conditions by which we are surrounded, there exists no reason why we should ever think of resorting to coercive measures. But because we are precluded from pursuing this course, it does not follow that we must not apply a remedy which shall be less severe but more effectual. Once let us understand that there is an inherent antagonism between Romanism and Republicanism, and it will not require a very long time for us to realize that our only proper remedy consists in the renewal of Protestant energy and the robustness of thought which this energy produces. If our liberality permits the Church of Rome to sow the dragon's teeth of Cadmus among us, it will not do for us to meet the danger in any other manner than by an intelligent firmness, appealing to the higher forms of patriotism rather than to the lower impulses of bigotry and revenge. In this way we reach the consciousness of the nation, and, by kindling a healthy sentiment against the inroads of Romanism, render unnecessary those legislative measures which other nations have



found it advisable to adopt. In a method such as this there is nothing unwise, nothing violent or revolutionary ; it is simply the exercise of a privilege which we enjoy as rational beings—a privilege which it may be said the exigencies of the present invest with the grandeur and solemnity of duty.

Acting in obedience to this principle, we simply place ourselves in the position of an intelligent people who read in the signs of the times the indications of danger. Turning to the character of the Church of Rome, and then to the Constitution of the United States, we find certain differences so deeply seated and antagonistic in their nature as to leave no doubt as to consequences which must inevitably follow ; differences which, to use the language of one who has carefully studied the subject, may be summed up in the following manner : “ The Constitution of the United States repudiates the idea of an established religion ; yet the Pope tells us that this is in violation of God’s law, and that, by that law, the Roman Catholic religion should be made exclusive, and the Roman Catholic Church, acting alone through him, should have sovereign

authority, 'not only over individuals, but nations, peoples, and sovereigns,' so that the whole world may be brought under its dominion, and be made to obey all the laws that he and his hierarchy shall choose to promulgate ! and that this same Church shall have power also to inflict whatever penalties he shall prescribe upon all those who dare to violate any of these laws. The Constitution guarantees liberty of speech and of the press ; yet the Pope says this is 'the liberty of perdition,' and should not be tolerated. The Constitution requires that all the people, and all the churches, shall obey the laws of the United States ; yet the Pope anathematizes this provision, because it requires the Roman Catholic Church to pay the same measure of obedience to law that is paid by the Protestant churches ; and claims that the government shall obey him in all religious affairs, and in all '*secular* affairs' which pertain to religion and the Church, so that *his will in all these matters shall become the law of the land*. The Constitution subordinates all churches to the civil power, except in matters of faith and discipline ; yet the Pope declares this to be heresy, because God has commanded that the

Government of the United States, and all other governments, shall be subordinate to the Roman Catholic Church. The Constitution repudiates all 'royal power'; yet the Pope condemns this, and proclaims that the world must be governed by 'royal power,' in order that it may protect the Roman Catholic Church to the exclusion of all other churches! The Constitution allows the free circulation of the Bible, and the right of private judgment in interpreting it; yet the Pope denounces this, and says that the Roman Catholic Church is the only 'living authority' which has the right to interpret it, and that *its* interpretation should be the only one allowed, and should be protected by law, while all others should be condemned and disallowed."<sup>1</sup>

I make this quotation because it presents in a clear and striking light some of the differences which separate Romanism from Republicanism, and also because these differences point unmistakably to the necessity of our understanding what may happen should the Roman Catholic Church ever become strong enough to attempt

<sup>1</sup> "The Papacy and the Civil Power." R. W. Thompson. Harper & Bros.

to put its imperious and uncompromising policy into practice.

As matters now stand, it must be confessed that such a contingency is too remote to cause any serious alarm. But who shall say that, while there is no chance of Romanism gaining in the immediate future such an ascendancy, there is not every chance that a prolonged indifference and sluggishness on the part of Protestants may not give to Rome the controlling power which now seems remote and unattainable?

Given a continuance of the opportunities which now exist in consequence of our drowsiness and indifference, who shall say that there may not come a time when the empire of ecclesiastical Rome shall flourish over the ruins of the fairest and most promising republic that ever existed? I am aware that there is a very general feeling among us which leads us to believe that we need give ourselves no concern about our future until we have heard that Macaulay's New Zealander has "taken his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge, to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's." But this is only another evidence of how far our judgment is in-

fluenced by the misleading tendencies of an extreme optimism—an optimism which prevents us from realizing the existence of danger because it happens to be latent rather than apparent.

Forgetting that the greatness of a nation depends on the robustness of its moral character and the healthy circulation of its intellectual and spiritual life, we overlook the fact that with us, as with other nations, there may be conditions which are not visible on the surface, but which are none the less potent for good or evil. As an example of this it may not be amiss to remember that the ruin of the Roman Republic was brought on, not by violence, but through inward decay. For five hundred years it ruled in Italy and in the countries on the Mediterranean, and then through the process of inward decay it made room for the new monarchy of Cæsar.

Of course, the termination of the Roman Republic from these causes does not imply that our doom is sealed, and that we shall in a comparatively short time cease to exist as a nation. Far be it from my purpose to convey the impression that there does not exist in this repub-

lic sufficient vitality to carry us through crises which it would have been almost impossible for the Roman Republic to have passed through successfully. But in encouraging our hopes, and in looking forward to the possibilities of a future more brilliant than our past, let us not forget that there is a dark side to the picture, which every thoughtful mind is bound to consider. In other words, while we look forward hopefully, let us always remember that nations as well as individuals contain a principle of decay which must sooner or later bring all things to an end.

Naturally enough this thought is distasteful to most persons ; but it will not do to dismiss it on that account. Nor is there any valid reason why the thought should discourage us or diminish our interest in the progressive conditions by which we are surrounded. Instead of this, the consciousness that we are liable to such a principle of decay ought rather to stimulate us in our appreciation of every thing that helps our vitality, at the same time that it ought to teach us to look with suspicion on every thing which tends to reduce the quantity and quality of our vital force.



If it is true that we cannot separate ourselves from those elements of decay which render it inevitable that

“ Every thing that grows  
Holds in perfection but a little moment,  
And this huge state presenteth nought but shows,  
Whereon the stars in silent influence comment ;”

it is no less true that we are the possessors of certain elements of immortality which can defy the ravages of time and the conditions of change. If it is true that ages must change, and nations must rise and fall, it is equally true that certain conditions will always remain the same amidst the ever-varying phenomena of life. If it is true that in view of the transitory nature of all things human, it would be manifestly absurd to suppose that this republic can exist without passing through crises and changes which bear very closely on the time and manner of our dissolution, it is quite as true that our future is largely in our own hands.

That such crises and changes must come, experience has already shown. But the fact of their existence does not in any way prevent us from carefully protecting those principles of liberty and progress on which the measure

of our national greatness primarily depends. On the contrary, the existence of these crucial tests serves the more fully to convince us of the importance of those principles of liberty and progress which Protestant civilization contends for ;— principles which are also the elements of our national life most likely to resist the encroachments of decay, and at the same time most likely to keep us healthy and vigorous in our march through those future ages when century shall have succeeded to century, and when nations yet unborn shall rise and flourish over the ruins of many of those that now exist.

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